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CHRIST AND THE EASTERN SOUL

THE WITNESS OF THE ORIENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS TO JESUS CHRIST

BY
CHARLES CUTHBERT HALL, D.D., LL.D.
Late President of the Union Theological Seminary, New York

THE BARROWS LECTURES
1906–1907

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TO
THOUGHTFUL INDIANS OF ALL FAITHS
THESE LECTURES
ARE DEDICATED RESPECTFULLY
BY
A CITIZEN OF THE WEST
WHO BELIEVES IN THE UNITY OF THE
HUMAN RACE
AND WHO LOOKS
WITH REVERENCE ON THE INDIA OF THE PAST
WITH AFFECTION ON THE INDIA OF THE PRESENT
AND WITH ARDENT EXPECTATION
ON
THE INDIA OF THE FUTURE

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THE BARROWS LECTURESHIP FOUNDATION

The Barrows Lectureship was established in 1894 by Mrs. Caroline E. Haskell. The first course of lectures was delivered during the winter of 1896–1897 by Dr. John Henry Barrows, in whose honor the lectureship was named. Dr. Barrows gave one or more lectures in each of the following cities: Calcutta, Lucknow, Cawnpore, Delhi, Lahore, Amritsar, Agra, Jeypore, Ajmere, Indore, Ahmednagar, Poona, Bangalore, Vellore, Madras, Madura, Palamcotta, Tinnevelly, and Colombo. This course of lectures has been published under the title, "Christianity, the World Religion." The second course of Barrows Lectures was delivered in Calcutta, and elsewhere in India, by Dr. A. M. Fairbairn, Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, during the winter of 1898–1899. This course of lectures has not been published. The third course was delivered in India, Ceylon, and Japan, by Dr. Charles Cuthbert Hall, during the winter of 1902–1903, and has been published under the title, "Christian Belief Interpreted by Christian Experience."

The letter of Mrs. Haskell to President Harper, in which she proposes to establish this lectureship in the University of Chicago, is as follows:

Chicago, October 12, 1894

President William R. Harper:

My dear Sir: I take pleasure in offering to the University of Chicago the sum of twenty thousand dollars for the founding of a

second Lectureship on the Relations of Christianity and the Other Religions. These lectures, six or more in number, are to be given in Calcutta (India), and, if deemed best, in Bombay, Madras, or some other of the chief cities of Hindustan, where large numbers of the educated Hindus are familiar with the English language. The wish, so earnestly expressed by Mr. P. C. Mozoomdar, that a lectureship, like that which I had the privilege of founding last summer, might be provided for India, has led me to consider the desirability of establishing in some great collegiate center, like Calcutta, a course of lectures to be given, either annually or, as may seem better, biennially, by leading Christian scholars of Europe, Asia, and America, in which, in a friendly, temperate, and conciliatory way, and in the fraternal spirit which pervaded the Parliament of Religions, the great questions of the truths of Christianity, its harmonies with the truths of other religions, its rightful claims and the best methods of setting them forth, should be presented to the scholarly and thoughtful people of India.

It is my purpose to identify this work, which, I believe, will be a work of enlightenment and fraternity, with the University Extension Department of the University of Chicago, and it is my desire that the management of this Lectureship should lie with yourself, as President of all the Departments of the University; with Rev. John Henry Barrows, D.D., the Professorial Lecturer on Comparative Religion; with Professor George S. Goodspeed, the Associate Professor of Comparative Religion; and with those who shall be your and their successors in these positions. It is my request that this Lectureship shall bear the name of John Henry Barrows, who has identified himself with the work of promoting friendly relations between Christian America and the people of India. The committee having the management of these lectures shall also have the authority to determine whether any of the courses shall be given in Asiatic or other cities outside of India.

In reading the proceedings of the Parliament of Religions, I have been struck with the many points of harmony between the different faiths, and by the possibility of so presenting Christianity to others as to win their favorable interest in its truths. If the

committee shall decide to utilize this Lectureship still further in calling forth the views of scholarly representatives of non-Christian faiths, I authorize and shall approve such a decision. Only good will grow out of such a comparison of views. . . . .

It is my wish that, accepting the offer I now make, the committee of the University will correspond with the leaders of religious thought in India, and secure from them such helpful suggestions as they may readily give. I cherish the expectation that the Barrows Lectures will prove, in the years that shall come, a new golden bond between the East and West. In the belief that this foundation will be blessed by our heavenly Father to the extension of the benign influence of our great University, to the promotion of the highest interests of humanity, and to the enlargement of the Kingdom of Truth and Love on earth, I remain, with much regard,

Yours sincerely,

Caroline E. Haskell

In conformity with this letter of gift, the following principles and regulations governing the Barrows Lectureship have been established:

1. A Committee, consisting of the President of the University of Chicago and the Professor of Comparative Religion, is entrusted with the management of the Lectureship.

2. Nominations to the Lectureship are made by the Committee and confirmed by the Board of Trustees of the University.

3. The Lecturer holds office for two years, during which period he is expected to deliver the series of lectures in a place or places agreed upon between himself and the Committee.

4. During his term of office, or in the year following its expiration, the Lecturer is expected to publish his lectures, at the University of Chicago Press, in the series known as "The Barrows Lectures," and to deposit two copies of the same with the Librarian of the University of Chicago, one of which is to be placed in the

General Library of the University, the other in the Departmental Library of Comparative Religion.

5. The Committee is empowered to add to these regulations any others which shall be in harmony with the terms or spirit of the Letter of Gift.

PREFACE

Mrs. Haskell's idea in founding the Barrows Lectures in India was a noble one. With broad catholicity of spirit she recognised the essential truth which is common to all forms of religious thought, and realised that men are prone to quarrel about diversities rather than to rejoice in the elements of unity. With this view it seemed to her that the essential Christian doctrines might well be presented to the acute Eastern mind in so unpolemic and yet cogent a form as to win appreciation of their beauty and power far more than is possible from the customary preaching of the gospel. The Indian is not a heathen, but is a man of deep religious life and profound philosophy. He is worthy to be approached by a similar mind.

The first course in India was given by the Rev. John Henry Barrows, D.D., in the winter of 1896–97, on the subject, "Christianity, the World Religion." The Rev. Dr. A. M. Fairbairn, principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, gave the second course in the winter of 1898–99. The title was "Religion and the Philosophy of Religion."

On June 29, 1899, the Board of Trustees of the University of Chicago appointed the Rev. Dr. Charles Cuthbert Hall as Barrows Lecturer. The intention at that time was for his visit to India to be made in the autumn of 1901. It was postponed for a year, however, and accordingly in the winter of 1902–3 the third

course was delivered, "Christian Belief Interpreted by Christian Experience." So deep an impression was made by these lectures that it was obviously wise for Dr. Hall to make a second visit to the East and to give the fourth course on the Barrows Foundation. On July 19, 1904, he was reappointed to the Barrows Lectureship, and this course, "Christ and the Eastern Soul," was given in the cities of India in the winter of 1906–7. The cities in which the series was delivered in full were Lahore, Allahabad, Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, and Bangalore. Individual lectures of the course were given in Simla, Lucknow, Benares, Dharmar, Ahmednagar, Hyderabad, and Ernakulam. Some were given in Ceylon and Manila, and a few in Japan. In the closing days of the Autumn Quarter, December 10–15, 1907, the lectures were repeated at the University, in accordance with the plan of the donor, and Dr. Hall closed his services to the University of Chicago with the Convocation sermon on Sunday, December 15, 1907. In 1908 he passed away from this life.

This is the bald record of facts connected with the final great work of one of the most gifted of our religious leaders. His was a rare soul. One who was associated with him in college life and knew in those early years his sterling character and his rich promise finds it not easy to pause here. But his own words will speak of him more eloquently than any that others can find.

It should be stated that owing to the condition of his health Dr. Hall was unable in person to complete the preparation of the manuscript for the press, and that at his request this work was performed by Mr. Robert

Russell Wicks, who accompanied him on his second journey, and by his son, Basil Douglas Hall. For the above reasons the notes doubtless are not so complete as the author would have wished. The employment of English orthographical forms, it may be added, is in accordance with Dr. Hall's wishes.

HARRY PRATT JUDSON

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
November, 1908

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

"Like a bridge over a mountain torrent he joined two precipices, and the stream of controversy passed beneath him"—such is the epitaph I would inscribe over the life of Charles Cuthbert Hall. The accumulated knowledge of an earnest student, the profundity of a refined character, and the noble piety of a Christian mystic equipped him to play the part, which he fulfilled so well, of ambassador, interpreter, friend from the Western to the Eastern world. The God-designed oneness of the human race was to him no idle theory or doubtful speculation; it was a guiding principle for practical activity through a lifetime. With the courage of deathless conviction, he chose the widest chasm that breaks the unity of mankind and divides the world into two sharply contrasted sections of East and West, upon which to spend the constructive force of his manhood at its zenith, laying down his life for his espoused cause as willingly and as truly as a Livingstone or a Patteson.

It was the balance of the man added to his passion that made him singular and won him our love. In his missionary zeal to contribute to the Orient the greatest blessing held in trust for the world by the West, the gospel of Jesus Christ, he did not underestimate the treasures that lie hidden in the Oriental Consciousness, for lack of a share in which we of the West, with all our vaunted wealth, are but poor. "The world, blinded by material objects and hardened by self-centred motives,

needs a fresh interpretation of Christ from some human source where faith in the Invisible is still the great Reality, and interest in the ultimate problems of the soul, still an unspent river of delight." For this needed interpretation he looked to the contemplative, mystical countries of the Far East, and especially to India, mother of great religions.

Four years ago Dr. Hall, in anticipation of his second visit to the Orient, with characteristic generosity tempered by humility, asked permission to render us some service when he came to the Philippines. His advent thither was like the inflowing of a cool breeze from the sea on a sultry day. He was fresh from his last experience as Barrows Lecturer when, in February of 1907, he delivered, in the Cathedral of St. Mary and St. John in the city of Manila, a series of lectures which were a golden echo of those just concluded in India. A man of his depth of character and Christian experience could have but one theme, the theme of every mature follower of the Saviour from St. Paul to Gregory the Great and from Gregory the Great to Mackay and Judson and Hannington—Christ for mankind and mankind for Christ.

In our many conversations during his visit, he discoursed with enthusiasm on the intelligent and appreciative hearing given him in India by the cultured natives. He vehemently protested against the theory that the evangelisation of the educated Indian, because of his intellectual pride, was hopeless, and that Christianity's sole opportunity lay among the low-caste poor and the pariahs. Justly he maintained that "the finite

mind" was "the most glorious of all God's productions;" and the reverent attention meted out to his sympathetic but uncompromising presentation of Christian truth among scholarly devotees of leading Eastern cults during both his visits to the Orient demonstrated anew that all knowledge is an avenue for the triumphal entry of the Word of God into the human soul.

Dr. Hall was no stranger to the sacred lore of the East. Without unduly accentuating its merits or detracting from its glories, he aimed to put it into normal relation to the Truth as revealed in Jesus Christ. He knew, and his poetic soul valued, "the magnificent Vedic hymns;" he was conversant with the profound philosophy of the Upanishads; he was quick to discover Logos teaching in the Maha Bharata. Christianity, the fulfilling religion, was the burden of his song. "The truth that is in your several faiths cannot be shaken by your assimilation of the faith of Christ. Truth never casts out truth, it casts out only error and whatsoever else has served its purpose fully and is ready to depart." Every lesser truth which the gospel touches is thereby not destroyed but transfigured and given new life and power—a fact to which the modern missionary must respond by studying the religions which surround him, until his consciousness is as fully saturated by their merits as the consciousness of the early Christians was saturated by the truths of the Old Testament. If we find in Oriental scriptures much that is repellant and ethically incomplete, it is no more than we find in the polygamies, the deceits, the cruelties of our own Old Testament. The Old Testament, without the interpre-

tive and refining influence of the New, would be a poor guide to life. The relation which the New Testament bears to the Old is representative of what it is capable of being to the scriptures of the Orient. The road to Christianity for the adherents of great pre-Christian religions is not through the laborious route of Old Testament thought, but through their own beliefs straight into the gospel. I once suggested to an eminent scientist and mystic that it might be well for Christian hands to bind up representative Oriental scriptures with the New Testament. He replied that the association of the Jewish scriptures with the Christian writings had not been a converting factor among the Jews. That is true. But it has had the effect of giving to the world the real wealth of the Old Testament; and the wealth of the Oriental religious mind will come to us only when its product is studied appreciatively in the light of the gospel. We need this wealth and we shall only half know the meaning and the power of the Incarnation, let alone equip ourselves for the evangelisation of the Orient, until we have made it our very own, as we desire the Oriental to make our Scriptures his very own.

Those of us who have made a close study of Eastern life agree with Dr. Hall's contention that it is both impertinent and harmful to impose upon the Oriental world the exact reproduction of our Western institutions, either in government or religion. An ardent patriot himself, he reverenced the glimmerings of patriotism in men of other races, and deprecated any slight offered to natives by foreign officials. As to the Western embodiment of Christianity he says:

Next to the ethical misrepresentation of the Christian religion by the perverse and contradictory lives of its nominal adherents, I know of nothing more likely to repel Orientals from the sympathetic study of this Eastern faith [Christianity] than the overshadowing prominence of ecclesiastical institutions. That these institutions are inseparable from the Occidental practise of Christianity, history appears to show. That they have their excellent uses, in their own sphere, it would be but questionable wisdom to deny.

But we must learn to distinguish between the essential and the incidental in Christian institutionalism, affording Oriental Christianity free scope to shape itself. This we have not yet succeeded in doing. There must be a season of patience in our labours for Christ in the Orient, during which the Christian missionary will have to be content to teach and work exactly as his Master taught and worked, without regard for exact results, manifest conversions, dignified organisations, and gratifying statistics. Then in God's good time the Oriental church will rear its walls suitably to its environment. Like the West it is bound to have its heresies and schisms. Though their racial coherence makes the Orientals less prone to divisions than ourselves, we have educated them to look for a broken Christendom from the first. The evils we can perhaps undo in a measure, mitigating in their case the fury, the bitterness, the hatred of our own history, if we hush our sectarian cries and work constructively and lovingly for the advancement of the Kingdom of God, whether here or yonder, after the example of His faithful servant, Charles Cuthbert Hall, who, having finished his course, now rests from his labours.

The hour is one in which the ends of the earth are rapidly being drawn together. Races and nations are overflowing their bounds. Exclusion acts, which by the right of might we of the West erect against the Orient, are effective only for a moment and will go down as the corn under the sickle before the world is much older. And it is we, who are barring our gates to the Oriental, that are responsible for the coming flood—we who invaded his territory to exploit him, to infect him with our vices, to make him the instrument of our commercialism and the toy of our pleasure. He has as true a right to talk about the "white" as we the "yellow" peril. The West has laid ruthless hands upon his traditions, has discounted his religions, has usurped the right to administer the affairs of the yellow "brother" and the brown, has dictated to him the course he must pursue, has compelled him to accept our mode of education. If we now complain that he is aspiring to democracy, that he expects treatment according to the Golden Rule, that he demands place among the nations of the world with freedom to travel and work where he will, it is we who have implanted in his heart aspiration for national life, equal treatment, and independent status; it is we who have afforded him access to our inventions and pressed upon him what we are pleased to call civilisation.

The upshot of it all is that the East is going to overflow its banks with the force of a resistless tide, "florid with blood, pensive, rapt with musings, hot with passion," and our children's children will testify to the truth of the prophecy as they commend or condemn us,

their forbears, according as we have builded well or badly in preparation.

The day of this happening, though it cannot be averted, is not necessarily to be lamented. It is part of the process of working out the destiny of the race as a family of one common humanity. We of to-day are charged with the responsibility of making ready for it. It will be a calamity only so far as we refuse to face the certain fact and to seize our present opportunity. The situation is this: East and West are pressing one upon the other with the proximity of neighbours having adjacent estates. Already Oriental diseases have infected our citizens, and Canada and the United States suddenly awake to the fact that they, as well as China, have an opium problem of imported origin. This is sufficient warning. Unless the best moral and spiritual ideals of the West prevail over, renew, and fulfil the ideals of the East, the decadent ideas of the East are going to sweep through the West with devastating might. Eastern cults claim to-day among their votaries thousands of high-bred Occidentals.

Mere self-protection demands prompt and aggressive action on our part, just as the cleaning-up of an infected city is a defence for the healthy as well as a remedy for the sick. But we must bestir ourselves from a much nobler motive. We have reached a stage where the honour of Jesus Christ is imperilled as perhaps never before. Unless Christianity rises from its lethargic, self-satisfied dreams and fulfils its common duty of going with force and a united front to its task of world-wide evangelisation, according to the distinct command of its Founder,

it is going to become more and more effete, until when the unconverted ideals of the Orient at last envelope the Christian Church, she will all but disappear.

On the other hand, if Christians reinforce the little group of missionaries now at work in far-off fields with the flower of their manhood and womanhood until it is swollen into an army, we can look forward, not only without dismay but with eagerness, to the day when the life of East and West will blend in disciplined and understanding fellowship under the leadership of Him who alone can unify and harmonise our strangely diversified and richly endowed humanity. Touched by Christianity the ideals and religions of the Orient are a contribution to the Kingdom of God; unconverted and unfulfilled they are a menace to the very life of Christianity.

Is it the prophet's thought I speak, or am I raving?
What do I know of life? What of myself?
I know not even my own work past or present,
Dim ever-shifting guesses of it spread before me,
Of newer better worlds, their mighty parturition,
Mocking, perplexing me.

The end I know not, it is all in Thee,
Or small or great I know not—haply what broad fields, what lands,
Haply the brutish measureless human undergrowth I know,
Transplanted there may rise to stature, knowledge worthy Thee,
Haply the swords I know may there indeed be turned to reaping-tools,
Haply the lifeless cross I know, Europe's dead cross, may bud and blossom there.

CHARLES H. BRENT
Bishop of the Philippine Islands

SYLLABUS

LECTURE I

ELEMENTS OF SUBLIMITY IN THE ORIENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Satisfaction and joy of the lecturer in returning to India. Reference to his former course of Barrows Lectures, in which he attempted to separate the essence of the Christian religion from accretions occurring in the West; and to present it for consideration upon its merits as intrinsically applicable to human consciousness. Reflection upon his former experience in India suggests correspondences between the Christian religion and the Oriental Consciousness. Opportunity afforded by the second appointment of the lecturer to express in India the results of this reflection. Psychological relation of Indian personality to the most lofty elements of the Christian religion.

1. Indication of three lines of procedure, to be followed in the present course of lectures.

   First: To analyse the Oriental Consciousness from the point of view of an outside observer in sympathy with his subject. Attempts to analyse Oriental Consciousness have been made by those not in full sympathy therewith. The effort of the lecturer undertaken reverently, with a view to exhibiting the presence of sublime elements.

   Secondly: To unfold certain metaphysical aspects of the Christian religion which are characteristic of it. These aspects frequently hidden by forms and institutions, which, while useful, must be discriminated from the underlying things of the Spirit.

   Thirdly: To exhibit the significance for the world of this correspondence between the sublime elements of Oriental Consciousness and the profoundly mystical aspects of the Christian religion.

2. The subject approached in no spirit of flattery. Analysis of the word "flattery" and repudiation of its spirit by the lecturer. Neither is he depreciating the qualities of Western civilisation, of which some account is given. Qualifications of remote racial inheritance combined with sincere love for India.
3. Study of the common nature of mankind attractive to the true citizen of the world. The unity of the human world an exhilarating thought. Temperamental and psychic variations worked out on a world-scale.

   The fact of race consciousness a fundamental fact of great value. Discussion of individual consciousness and race consciousness. Deep desire of the lecturer to comprehend the point of view controlling Oriental mentality. Observations on the distinctive type of self-realisation that overspreads like an atmosphere the vast populations of the East.
4. In the effort to discern the elements of this type of self-realisation, marks of sublimity are discovered. Discussion of the meaning of "sublimity." Expression of the hope that Occidental self-consciousness may be analysed by a friendly observer from the East.
5. Enumeration of four elements of Sublimity in the Oriental Consciousness: The Contemplative Life; The Presence of the Unseen; Aspiration toward Ultimate Being; Reverence for the Sanctions of the Past.
6. The Contemplative Life considered as the life ruled by thought; that esteems thought above action. Reflections on the importance and dignity of the mind. Influence of hereditary reflective tendency upon the modern Indian mind.
7. The Presence of the Unseen; discussion of visibility and invisibility, and of the relation of reality to the invisible. Maya. Significance of interest in the invisible. Expression of hope that the East may not withdraw from her interest in the Unseen, by reason of Western materialism.
8. Aspiration toward Ultimate Being constantly present in the soul of the East. Survival of this aspiration beneath polytheism and dissenting philosophies.

9. Reverence for the Sanctions of the Past. Western civilisation passing under the control of the future. Shifting of the centre of significance in thought. Contrast between East and West. Eastern mind sublimely tenacious of its inheritances. Watchword of the East, *Faith*.

LECTURE II

THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT IN THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

1. "Religious life is only possible when one gets to the centre of life, which is God Himself." Relation of mysticism to simplicity. A humble and quiet mind before God.
2. Universality of the phenomenon of mysticism: evidence herein of the essential unity of the race. Comparison of various definitions of mysticism; Inge; Pfleiderer; Seth; Augustine. Eternal freshness and charm of the greatest mystical conceptions.
3. Consideration of objections brought against mysticism. Two classes of objections: those directed against the general assumption that direct contact of the human spirit with the Divine Spirit is possible; those directed against particular forms of mysticism characteristic of the Oriental Consciousness, namely, Aspiration toward Ultimate Being. Objections of Nordau and Hermann considered. Recognition of the value of these objections as tending to put us on our guard against the decline of the ethical element in mysticism. Discussion of Oriental mysticism from point of view of objectors: deliberate aversion of the mind from external interests; seclusion of the soul tending to possible impoverishing of experience. Approach to the Metaphysical Absolute by negation tending to empty the soul of qualities which might be retained with profit. Concentration of the mind on a salvation attainable through esoteric knowledge tending to unfavourable reactions in the sphere of practical morals. Wise counsel of Professor Deussen against hasty judgment of Eastern systems of thought by Europeans.

4. Mystical Element in the Christian Religion to be presented from the points of view that Christianity is an Eastern religion and the Bible a Sacred Book of the East. Oriental characteristics of the Christian Scriptures. Mystical Element in Christian Religion compared to a river flowing continuously through its history.
5. Mysticism finds expression in Christianity in two spheres of consciousness: objective and subjective. Intense perception of the universe as an outward expression of the vitality of God. Reference to the nature-mysticism of Wordsworth and Kingsley. Resemblance of Kingsley's mysticism to some phases of Oriental thought; e. g., discrimination of the soul from the mind; animistic suggestions. But the Christian mystic regards the pervading spiritual presence as that of a Divine friend. The objective sense of God but the vestibule of the Mystical Element in the Christian Religion. The temple is within.
6. Experience of God's presence fulfilled and verified in the sanctuary of the inner consciousness. Inadequacy of religious symbols. Reality is within, in the mysterious depths of the Eternal Wisdom. Freedom of inner experience from ceremonialism and dogmatism. This inner experience of Christian mysticism has come to the West from the East. Suggestion of influence upon Biblical religion of early Aryan thought, through Persian channels. Oriental character of Biblical religion.
7. Apprehension of Christian religion by Eastern minds complicated by the overshadowing prominence of Western ecclesiastical institutions. Possibility of leaving these out of consideration and resting on the fundamental claim of all true mysticism that the seat of authority is within the soul itself; not in some outward tribunal. Truth within ourselves. To this conception the Christian religion lends itself.
8. Consideration of the ground of certitude in matters of religion. Higher Christian thinking not incompatible with corresponding plane of Indian thinking. Indian students of religion

often repelled from the Christian religion by encountering only the commonplace philosophy of untutored minds. Such minds frequently, through inexperience, unable to escape giving misleading representations of Christian thought: dualistic and anthropomorphic. Such conceptions not representative of the higher philosophy of the Christian religion. Probability that philosophical Hinduism suffers from corresponding misrepresentations. Attempt of the lecturer is to present in outline the higher Indian view of the universe. Maya. Emancipation. Soul-union with God.

9. In certain important particulars the higher forms of Indian and Christian philosophy of the universe not incompatible. This especially evident along lines of true mysticism: right of immediacy in the approach to God; criterion of truth found to exist in the nature of consciousness. Discernment of a Common Ground of Being beneath the multiplicity of individual existences. Hereby is the possibility of relation between individual existences. Pluralism gives place to monism. Lotze. Upton. Foundation of Christian mysticism is laid in the very nature of things.

10. Mysticism, or immediate access to God, the centre of the Christian religion. Yet the enlightened Christian does not repudiate the organised life of the Church. He admits the practical values of organisation. He takes his place as a unit in the institutional life of Christianity, submitting voluntarily to rules and ordinances for the general good. The true Christian, while a mystic, is not a recluse, shut up within himself for his soul's salvation. He takes a great interest in the world, especially in the lives of men.

    Interest in other lives promoted by the philosophical recognition of the Common Ground of life. Christian mysticism works outward into social service and self-fulfilment through sacrifice.

11. The secret walk with God. "*I have experienced God.*" Union of the Divine and human in a single, undivided life.

LECTURE III

THE WITNESS OF GOD IN THE SOUL

1. Deep impression made upon the mind when it reflects on the multiplicity of human lives. First effect confusing. This confusion removed on perceiving the action and reaction of thinking beings. The thinking world a wonderful phenomenon. All conditions of human life dependent on a common principle of rationality. Commercial contracts; domestic relationships; intellectual fellowship rising above race distinctions. Civilisation.
2. The higher Christian thinking seeks a rational solution of the mystery of a thinking world. Individual lives cannot be regarded as absolutely separate existences, each one being a self-subsistent whole. No adequate explanation of human relations from such a theory. The only adequate explanation found in an ultimate monism.
3. Beneath all finite life is one Infinite Ground of Being; the Substance, or Life, that *stands under* all finite life. In all existences the Infinite Being exists; thereby men communicate intelligibly with one another and with God. In this explanation of the phenomenon of a thinking world we find a basis for our subject: the Witness of God in the Soul.
4. This conception not foreign to Indian conception of Being. Consideration of resemblance between this conception and the doctrine of a self-subsisting Brahma in higher Indian thinking. Remark on Deism.
5. While the Christian basis here stated is not incompatible with Indian thought, it is to be distinguished from pantheism. Tendency of pantheistic thought ultimately obscures individuality, causing it to appear illusory. Moral responsibility thereby obscured; for conduct thus made the outcome of antecedent conditions, each determined by one preceding. Remark on recognition of practical distinction between God and man in Hinduism. Discussion of the Christian view of personality. Glorious function of the mind. Illustration from

the qualities of memory. Nature of moral freedom. Desire of the lecturer to refrain from controversy. His assurance that whatsoever is of the essence of truth must forever abide. Christian view of personality: the mind, stimulated by its self-determining capacity, consecrates its powers to the highest use; the soul, garlanded with freedom and illumined with the Spirit of God, confronts moral responsibility and chooses righteousness.

6. A basis thus laid, upon which the Witness of God in the Soul becomes a reasonable and authoritative conception. The will not the automatic instrument of determinism. It is self-determining; consummating action by decision, so taking on moral responsibility.
7. The higher Christian thinking is conscious of a Divine Witness in man, for which temperament and pious tradition do not account. This Witness also a Presence. This Witness similarly manifested in innumerable souls. Conclusion reached that this Presence bearing witness in human souls is identical with the Common Ground and Substance of Being. This conclusion strengthened by considering the nature of man's mental power; which is of the highest order; self-conscious, possessing memory and aspiration, continuous, consecutive, universal. These powers of rational existence viewed as projections of the Infinite Consciousness.
8. The formulas of negation considered as tending to limit one's joy in meditating upon the fulness of the Divine Essence. Nevertheless the sublimity of these formulas is admitted and the belief is expressed that they may without distortion be devoted to the service of a higher Oriental Christianity.
9. The higher Christian thinking acknowledges that in the quest for God we must pass beyond attributes, qualities, and all notes of personality. Although we discover the attributes of God, yet beyond them remains His unsearchableness. This thought demanded alike by reason and experience. The whole essence of God cannot be expressed in terms of attribute and quality. Corroboration of this view in Holy Scripture.

Analogy to the unsearchableness of God found in the "Buried Life" of man. The sub-conscious life. Pure Being not incompatible with rational and moral personality of the Divine; even as subliminal consciousness in man not incompatible with reason, conscience, and will. The unfathomable yet personal God may bear witness through the sub-conscious life of man, in the region of human reason, conscience, and feeling. Intimation of three modes of this witness: the still, small Voice; the Sure Word of Prophecy; the Christ of God.

10. The still, small Voice: its witness universal; beneath all forms of religion; eternal distinction of right and wrong. The Voice of God Who cannot be silenced. Conscience. The diseases of conscience; the health of conscience. Conscience without significance unless considered in relation to God. Conscience the ear of the soul, by means of which the still, small Voice is heard. The imperative of an ideal righteousness. The Christian conception of the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

11. The Sure Word of Prophecy. God speaks to the inward life through truth outwardly declared. Revelation through the power of the Spirit of Truth. Inspiration in the sub-conscious life resulting in the utterance of Truth. The Sure Word of Prophecy vindicates its reality by producing in the soul the effect of God. Observations on the nature of Truth. Discrimination of Truth from antiquity, usage, and declarative authority. The Witness of God in the Soul confirming the Sure Word of Prophecy.

12. The Christ of God. This mode of the Divine witness to be treated fully in succeeding lectures. At this point two preliminary statements are made:
    a) It is inadequate to consider the Christian religion in any light that excludes the Divinity of Christ.
    b) The sublime elements of the Oriental Consciousness lend themselves to the most profound interpretation of the Divinity of Christ.

LECTURE IV

THE WITNESS OF THE SOUL TO GOD

1. Brief review of the three modes of Divine witness. The Oriental Consciousness qualified to discharge for the world a service of which it stands in need. Present need of the world a Christianity deepened and spiritualised through recovery of elements germane to the Oriental Consciousness. Whatever great need arises in the world implies God's summons to those who have the means to meet that need.
2. The Witness of the Soul to God a proposition acceptable to those holding a monistic philosophy. For the soul lives in God even as God lives in the soul. Remark on Professor James's definition of religion. Ethical consciousness of the Infinite necessary to the creation of a religion. Remark on various theories of the origin of religion. Conclusion that religion springs from man's oneness of nature with the Infinite Ground and Source of Being.
3. Upon such a theory the message of religion should prove an incentive to noble living and a noble estimation of life. Morbid self-depreciation, and its injurious results. Relation of true penitence to a high estimate of self. Irrepressible nature of ethical desire. Inadequacy of material conditions as a ground of contentment. Value of materialism acknowledged, but its limitations pointed out. Voluntary renunciation as seen in India. Contrasted with discontent found among some having great possessions.
4. Our religious instincts suggest the possibility of participation in the Divine purpose as well as in the Divine Life. This suggestion accounted for by the necessary unity of consciousness. The zeal of the soul must be to co-operate with that Eternal Will of Goodness to which it is inseparably conjoined.
5. Discussion of the moral significance of atheism. A tragic witness to God found in the effort of the atheist to suppress the instinct and tendency of the soul. Doubt considered as a Witness of the Soul to God. Doubt sometimes the result of an

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overwhelming apprehension of God. "I could not see for the glory of that Light."

6. The Aspiration toward Ultimate Being considered as a positive Witness of the Soul to God. Great significance of this. Its place in Oriental Consciousness. The East qualified for important Christian service by reason of this characteristic.
7. With the growth of Christianity, the Oriental Aspiration toward Ultimate Being has been supplemented in important ways. Discrimination between contradictory and supplementary expressions of religious instinct. Analysis of the fact of contradictory expressions of religious instinct. Examples found in divergent Christian beliefs on matters of secondary importance. This not incompatible with agreement on fundamental questions. Contradictory expressions found to exist between the several great religions of the world. This fact not incompatible with the development of supplementary expressions of religious thought in later religions enriching and completing the content of earlier religions.
8. The Aspiration toward Ultimate Being the most fundamental form of soul-longing. Pantheism involves primarily the subjugation of the visible for the sake of the invisible. Message of pantheism to modern life. Spinoza. Von Hartmann. Yet pantheism as a corrective of materialism only partially effective. It requires to be supplemented, particularly along lines relating to man's ethical consciousness. Remark on Professor Deussen's view of the relation of the Veda and the Bible.
9. How does Christianity in its highest realm of thinking supplement a pantheistic philosophy? The message of pantheism distinctively a message to the intellectual consciousness of man. The message of Christianity distinctively a message to his moral consciousness. Pantheism deals with the facts and sanctions of the Pure Reason; Christianity with the facts and sanctions of the Practical Reason. The moral consciousness as actual as the intellectual consciousness. If the last be acknowledged, the first must also be acknowledged. The

two are co-ordinated in man. To deny moral consciousness would require the denial of intellectual consciousness; equivalent to the denial of the Absolute.

10. The nature of moral consciousness; primarily existent in the sub-conscious life. The sense of the value of good. The authority of good for ourselves. "I ought." Power to discern between higher and lower affections. To what source must we attribute moral consciousness? Evidently that source must be identical with the source of intellectual consciousness. The Ultimate Intelligence and the Heart of God. The Witness of the Soul to the moral character of God.
11. Relation of pantheism and Christianity in the world's advance to an adequate knowledge of God. Mission of pantheism to assert the Being of God: *that* He is. Mission of Christianity to assert the Character of God: *what* He is.
12. But is it admissible to say what God is? Is not the Infinite unknowable? Comparison of Western and Eastern tendencies under the common impulse of reverence. The West defines; the East refrains from defining. The adjustment is obtained by co-ordinating these tendencies. Thus pantheism and Christianity become co-operative.
13. Comparison of ethical ideals viewed in relation to culture. Love, the highest ethical ideal; the highest fact in consciousness. The Best. Conclusion that Love is the most central fact in the moral consciousness of Ultimate Being. "God is Love." This love we cannot conceive in its essence within the Moral Consciousness of God. It is from our point of view unknowable. But God can come to us and confirm our hopes through self-manifestation in the form of an Incarnate Life. Has God so come to us? Has there at any time issued from the Inconceivable Absolute an Interpreter of the secrets of Divine Intelligence?

LECTURE V

THE DISTINCTIVE MORAL GRANDEUR OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

1. Great religions, like great men, have strongly marked distinctions. A religion of joy. A religion of beauty. A religion of contemplation. The Christian religion possesses these qualities, but is, also, distinctively a religion of character. This its unifying principle; to contemplate God on the moral side of Being, in terms of the Ethical Ideal. "The new element which Christianity has introduced into the thought of the world."
2. The term "Religion of Character" as applied to Christianity not intended to depreciate the ethical values in other religions. Ethics and culture. Joy, beauty, contemplation take on new meanings in a religion of character. Hereby it may be said to introduce a new element into the thought of the world.
3. Wherein consists the distinctive moral grandeur of the Christian religion? The importance of a distinction judged by what lies back of it. The moral distinction of Christianity does not rest on institutions, civilisation, tradition, or ecclesiastical authority. It rests upon the personality of the Incarnate Life. The appearance of Jesus Christ in the world understood by few of His Disciples. His rejection by Judaism and by the world. His Death and Resurrection. Evidence of His transforming power accumulates with time. The moral authority of the religion of Christ determined from history and from experience. These sources open to all.
4. He who would apprehend the distinctive grandeur of the Christian religion must consider the Nature of Man, the Nature of God, and the need of a religion of character in the world. He must then consider the life purpose of Jesus Christ; the power of Jesus Christ in the Christian Consciousness; the Divinity of Jesus Christ as the Revelation of the Heart of God.
5. Discussion of the growth of personal religious experience advancing from tradition and ceremonial observance to the

inner sanctuary of soul-consciousness. The deep secret of the Christian religion cannot be taught externally. The basis of ethical reality. The things of the Spirit must be spiritually discerned.

6. Steps that should be taken by one seeking in the Christian religion. The starting-point is one's self. Fascination of the study of self. Wonderful influence of actions and words proceeding from human selves. Greatest mystery of selfhood, the will and the ethical elements in volition. Von Hartmann "on the laboratory of volition." The self not one but many. Correspondences of human personality. This shown to proceed from the Immanent Life beneath all individual selves.
7. From this we advance to a conception of the Nature of God in its relation to man. Picton on monism. God not an isolated Being, but a Source. We are His offspring and in Him we live. But the secret of the Christian religion cannot be found in abstract meditation on the nature of Being. Christianity advances from the point of Divine Immanence, toward practical moral conclusions. Man's invincible conviction of freedom. Absolute idealism describes this conviction as illusory. This explanation fraught with ethical difficulty and peril. The Christian religion organised around the central fact of an ego which is a real other to God; a moral person, responsible for its choices and its acts.
8. The distinctive moral grandeur of the Christian religion and its practical value for the world found in the fact that it exists for the purpose of dealing with the two ethical realities, moral evil and moral good. This is its reason for being. It is a religion of character. Nevertheless it is fully acknowledged that pantheism, with its profound conception of the nature of Being, is a preparation of the highest value for the distinctive ethical message of the Christian religion. Reference to the temperamental tendency of the West to externalise God. Relative limitation of mysticism in the West.
9. The religion of character in its relation to mysticism. Recognition of the mystery of being deepens the sense of sin and the

reality of penitence. It also qualifies to discriminate motives and to discern higher affections. It finds in holy love the highest ideal of moral consciousness, and in the fact of Jesus Christ the answer to the soul's longing for confirmation of its instinctive perception of the best.

10. The fact of Christ a threefold fact. The first element in it is the life purpose of Jesus Christ as shown historically in His visible Ministry. This must be supplemented by considering His continuous power in the Christian Consciousness and His Divinity as the Revelation of the Heart of God. These aspects act and react on one another. The significance of Christ not immediately discerned. It required meditation, reflection, comparison after His departure. The growth, in the second century, under Eastern influence, of a profound recognition of the Nature of Jesus Christ as the Brightness of the Everlasting Light, the Word that was in the beginning with God.

11. After two thousand years of testing, the Christian religion stands confirmed in the historical element and in the mystical element. Appeal to the Oriental Consciousness to assimilate this religion and interpret it to the world.

LECTURE VI

THE MINISTRY OF THE ORIENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN A WORLD-WIDE KINGDOM OF CHRIST

1. The lecturer has not concealed his purpose in the delivery of these lectures. He views with concern tendencies developing in the West toward the spirit of aggression, externalism, and the love of pleasure. He regards the triumph of such tendencies as a calamity which would involve the world and react with particular severity upon the East. He believes that the only correction of these tendencies must be a reinterpretation of the Christian religion, especially of those truths and values that lie chiefly in the mystical realm. These truths and

values inhere in the divinity of Jesus Christ as the Eternal Answer coming forth from unknowable depths of the Infinite to confirm the soul's highest moral ideal, to disclose the holy love which is the central principle in the Heart of God, to interpret that love by sacrifice.

2. The lecturer believes that the sublime qualities of the Oriental Consciousness are distinctively those required to accomplish this reinterpretation of Christianity. He therefore appeals to the East to confer an inestimable good upon the world by becoming the champion of a higher Christian thinking, conceived in terms of Oriental mentality but universally applicable as a corrective of overdeveloped materialism. That he may be thoroughly understood in his appeal, he speaks in this concluding lecture of three things: the deeper mysteries of Jesus Christ; the qualities in modern civilisation that blind men to those mysteries; the qualities in Oriental Consciousness that are divinely empowered to interpret them.
3. A pantheistic inheritance qualifies for the apprehension of the deeper mysteries of Jesus Christ. Inadequacy of regarding Christ merely as a distinguished Teacher. If He be but that, He should not be accorded greater honour than is given to other Gurus. The dominating civilisations of the world tend to relinquish the mystical conception of the Nature of Christ in favour of an external and formal appreciation of His words. This tendency can best be resisted by the aid of those who approach the fact of Christ from the point of view of a pantheistic inheritance.
4. Such an approach to the deeper mysteries of Jesus Christ should begin in the historical fact: the life purpose of Jesus Christ. Christ's historical appearance in the world within a measurable distance from the present age. Critical investigation has completely established the historical reality of Jesus Christ and the authenticity of words and deeds attributed to Him. The influence of the personality of Christ upon His disciples. The miracles and the teachings of Christ. The Divinity of Christ appears, in history, chiefly in the pur-

pose governing His Life. Christ formed one plan and executed it: to give happiness to the world by establishing a world-wide Kingdom of Righteousness. He Himself the Head of this Kingdom. This claim of supremacy not incompatible with His meek and lowly Spirit. Christ and "Enthusiasm for Humanity." He proceeded to carry into effect this life purpose not by force but by sacrifice. The glorious significance of the Death of Jesus Christ.

5. The power of Christ in the Christian Consciousness. Discussion of the nature of consciousness. Jesus Christ seeks to accomplish His life purpose within the self-knowing soul of each individual man. In the soul Christ becomes known, not historically and externally, but through an esoteric experience as the Ground of a morally transformed and illumined consciousness. The apprehension of Christ Mystical an advance beyond the apprehension of Christ Historical. Yet the Christ Mystical, immediately discerned in the circle of consciousness, is the continuous, present, subjective manifestation of the same Christ Historical, and not another. The mysteries of Jesus Christ not nature-marvels taking the form of external signs. They are mysteries of the Spirit, inwardly apprehended in terms of ethical self-realisation. He comes to animate and control our moral powers. He comes to regulate our natural tendencies by furnishing us with new motives. He comes to interpret to us the depths of our own being, the suggestions of our sub-conscious life.
6. The Divinity of Jesus Christ as the Revelation of the Heart of God. The Oriental Consciousness has its inheritance in this mystical truth, and its power to restore that truth to pristine grandeur, in the eyes of the whole world. Influence of the Person of Christ on the Oriental thought of the second century. He was recognised as the Logos; the Revelation of the Heart of God. This Revelation supremely accomplished by Christ through His Cross and Passion. Meditation on the loneliness of Christ's sacrifice. Its unique significance in the midst of the whole field of terrestrial suffering.

7. Concluding address: Remarks on the qualities now developing in Western civilisation through the passion for progress and the triumph of utilitarianism. Full acknowledgment of the value of qualities active in Western civilisation. Perils attendant on those qualities. Final appeal for co-operation from the cultured circles of the East to accomplish a reinterpretation of Christianity consonant with the splendid mysticism in which lay its original power.

LECTURE ONE

ELEMENTS OF SUBLIMITY IN THE ORIENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Four years have passed since the happy moment when, for the first time, I saw India and looked into the intellectual countenances of her people. That moment was a point of consummation in my life. It fulfilled the dream of childhood, the hope of youth, the prayer of riper years. I know not why it has pleased God, from the beginning of my days, to knit my heart to India. So it has been, and so it is. Four years ago I landed here a stranger to find myself among brethren. The scenes that passed before my eyes were unfamiliar; the voice that welcomed me to a brotherhood of the spirit was the old, sweet voice of love. The Orient was a new world, yet in the companionship of the Oriental Consciousness I felt at home. Your attitude, no less than your spirit, made my way throughout India a path of privilege. Courtesy, patient hearing, the generosity of tolerance were your God-speed to me everywhere. Of obstruction and opposition at your hands, I had no knowledge. You permitted me to speak, without reserve, not only of more general religious conceptions, such as are our common treasure, but of distinctive forms and relations which those conceptions have taken on through the power of Christ and a Christian philosophy and ethics. By the measure of my love for that Christian philosophy and ethics and for that Christ

Who is their Source is the measure of my affection and admiration for brethren of other faiths who could not only tolerate but encourage my freedom of speech. The subjects of which I treated at that time, when first discharging the duty of Barrows Lecturer to India from the University of Chicago in the United States of America, were those that lie near the heart of the Christian religion: The Idea of God; The Person of Christ as the Supreme Manifestation of God; Sin and the Sacrifice of Christ; Holiness; Immortality. To theologies and ecclesiastical institutions of the West, claims and contentions of rival sects in Europe and America, I gave no consideration in my lectures. I regarded these things as incidental developments and local adaptations occurring in the political and temperamental evolution of Western civilisation; not attractive to, nor authoritative for, the East. My interest lay in separating the essence of the Christian religion from those accretions and accessories occurring in the West, and presenting it for consideration upon its merits as something intrinsically applicable to our human consciousness as such. I spoke with this conviction and from this point of view: that man as man, be he Oriental or Occidental, is bound to find in the essence of the Christian religion that which concerns him as a man, appeals to him, seeks to win him and to control him, through reason, conscience, and affection.

The generous attention with which my lectures were heard in Indian circles of culture awakened in me irrepressible reflections, that passed beyond the plane of personal concerns. Gratitude and love toward cour-

teous and tolerant brethren gave place to profounder feelings. As I grew to apprehend the qualities of the Oriental Consciousness I saw their potential value for the higher interpretation of the Christian religion. It became clear to me that in the soul of the East are powers and gifts which stand in a significant relation to the higher truths of Christianity; correspondences which cannot be accidental, between the most sublime aspects of the religion of Christ and the most sublime qualities of the Eastern soul. Many times during the former visit among you I found myself exclaiming, How marvellously is the East qualified to be the interpreter of Christian mysteries; and how marvellously does the profound essence of Christian belief lend itself to the modes of Oriental Consciousness! Is there not here evidence of Divine intention, long unrealised? While the West heretofore has regarded Christianity as its own, an indigenous growth that might with difficulty be introduced to the East as an exotic, can it be that the Oriental Consciousness is, in fact, the natural soil of this Divine plant, and that, at last, after many centuries, from the fruitful ground of the Eastern soul, this seed of God is to spring to the perfect type and bear fruit a hundred fold?

Filled with these reflections, I returned to my native land at the close of my former term of lectures, and gave myself over to meditation. Renewal of association with current forms and types of Western Christianity did not dispel the impression received by contact with the East. It acquired definiteness. It organised about itself various scattered and subsidiary impressions. It became a

deliberate conviction. It produced in my soul a deep desire to return to the East, to re-enter the companionship of the most thoughtful minds, and, in their presence, to consider thoroughly what, if it be true, is a significant truth. At that juncture there came to me, unanticipated and unsought, a second appointment from the University of Chicago as Barrows Lecturer to India and the Far East. It seemed a Divine opportunity. It opened a way to present in ordered form, to your tolerant and discriminating minds, the results of my experiences and reflections. Therefore I am here; not, I trust, as a stranger, but rather as a friend returning to his friends, with whom he has taken sweet counsel before, and on whose broad and catholic friendship he now depends. I do not consider that our hereditary divergences of racial and religious tradition offer an impediment to fellowship in these hours of earnest thinking. You are Indian. So, in spirit and in interest, am I. With your history and your traditions I am familiar. With your literature and your philosophy I have some slight acquaintance. With your aspirations for national unity, for social betterment of communities, for spread of general and technical education, for equalising of opportunity, and for advancement of popular virtue and happiness, I am, as an American, in full accord. Best of all, with many members of Indian society I can now claim the honour of personal friendship. It seems therefore a natural thing to lay before you the outcome of reflections awakened by a study of Indian personality, in its psychological relation to profound and lofty elements of the Christian religion; in other words: The Witness of the

Oriental Consciousness to Jesus Christ. To accomplish this with any degree of satisfaction will involve three successive lines of procedure, to be followed in the six lectures of the course.

First: Analysis of the Oriental Consciousness, from the point of view of an outside observer in sympathy with his subject, will be required as part of my argument. The attempt to analyse the Oriental Consciousness often has been made in and by the West; yet not always, it may be, by one whose soul was in accord with his subject. Some have spoken in theory, which is, commonly, to speak in ignorance and in error; to shoot at long range through fog, and take chances of hitting the mark. Some have spoken in knowledge, yet in knowledge vitiated by prejudices of race, or limited through official restriction, or chilled by coldness of scientific classification; seeing, yet not seeing, because what one saw was misinterpreted, not through ignorance but through lack of love, that great interpreter of all mysteries of the soul. May there not be room for one to speak of the Oriental Consciousness from whom prejudices of race, restrictions of office, coldness of science, are absent, and who, in their place, offers these qualifications only: some measure of personal contact with Orientals, instinctive honour toward man as man, and love for Eastern hearts and Eastern minds that deepens with experience?

I am prepared to be told that my attempt to analyse the Oriental Consciousness may be regarded as an act of audacity. It cannot be esteemed an act of unfriendliness by those who know with what reverence and

appreciation it is undertaken; nor will it be resented by such as hear me to the end.

Secondly: I shall endeavour to unfold certain metaphysical aspects of the Christian religion which are most characteristic of it, and which, too often, are hidden from Eastern eyes by forms and institutions of Christian churches. In the course of twenty centuries outward forms and institutions have arisen as vehicles of truth, customs of worship, or methods of convenience. It is necessary that they should have arisen; but, to an extent quite unappreciated by most Europeans, these externalities may relatively conceal, from Oriental observers, those deep things of God, those abysses of the Spirit, which are the real glories of Christian belief, and the chief treasures of enlightened Christian Consciousness. The mystical elements in the religion of Christ; the witness of God in the soul; the witness of the soul to God; the controlling moral convictions that issue from these sources constitute the essence of the religion. I shall try to show that all serious attempts to understand Christianity and, much more, to come under its power, must take the form of approaches to these elements of its imperishable and universal essence. It is here, and only here, that we can be said to enter the spiritual temple of this Faith. Ecclesiastical systems, forms of worship, official distinctions are occasional, variable, partial, often transitory modes of expression; inadequate yet necessary attempts to give utterance to that which in its completeness transcends utterance. They who have seen most clearly into the depths of the Christian religion know how little of its profounder content can be

expressed in forms of language and ceremonial acts. He who has known Christ, not after the flesh but in the Spirit, has, with St. Paul, "heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."[1]

Thirdly: If I shall succeed in the attempts described above, on the one hand, to analyse the Oriental Consciousness so far as to draw attention to some of its sublime elements; on the other hand, to analyse those metaphysical aspects of the Christian religion which contain its hidden life and power, I shall then have the honour of pointing out, to such as may have patience to hear me to the end, not only the fact of correspondence between the finer qualities of the Eastern soul and the most spiritual subjects of Christian belief, but also the significance of that fact for the world. The religion of Christ, by virtue of its inherent cosmopolitanism and vitality, appears to be spreading from heart to heart and land to land, carried not so much by man's direct intention and effort as by the force of invisible influences. Its approaches appear to be received with less suspicion and with more cordiality in Eastern circles of culture. In view of the larger hearing that is being granted to Christianity in these latter times, one asks, What then is the significance for the world, of the remarkable correspondence that exists between the best in the Eastern Consciousness and the best in the Christian religion itself? What would be the ministry of the Oriental Consciousness in a world-wide Kingdom of Christ?

My brethren (if I may have the honour to address you in that term of blended affection and respect), I

[1] II Cor. 12:4.

have set before you in outline the purpose that brings me the second time to India. The prospectus of my argument is in your possession. You know my heart. I have kept nothing back. Because you are what you are, possessors, through a proud and ancient ancestry, of that most rich treasure, the Oriental Consciousness, I bring to you a treasure, rich, profound, sacred, worthy of your ancestry, worthy of yourselves. I ask you to examine it in relation to yourselves, looking upon it as an instrument through which you, gentlemen of the East, may discharge an incalculable service for the whole world.

And now may I ask you to turn with me to the special subject of this lecture, which is: "Elements of Sublimity in the Oriental Consciousness"? I ought to say that I approach this subject in no spirit of flattery. If any have attributed such a spirit to me, I desire to make ingenuous and comprehensive disavowal of it. Among men of culture and sincerity, approach in the spirit of flattery arouses, first resentment, then suspicion. The word "flattery," of obscure and uncertain origin, glides, with the flexibility of a reptile, through the paths of English literature, giving off now one shade of meaning, now another, yet always with connotations that awaken distrust. In its most ancient form it stands for the sinister instinct of certain animals that make caressing motions just before they strike their victim, as when Chaucer, in the "Merchant's Tale," says: "Lyk to the scorpion, that flaterest with thin heed, whan thou will stynge."[1] Now it means the attempt, by insidious

[1] 815.

speech, to please or win the favour of another; now it denotes the compliment spoken with the lip of insincerity; now the effort to feed and gratify morbid self-esteem; now the unethical art of inspiring with hope on insufficient grounds, as Shakspeare puts it, "Hope doth flatter thee in thoughts unlikely;"[1] and now it stands for a frequent offence against morality, the misleading effort to represent another too favourably, exaggerating his good points, concealing his errors. Against all these methods of playing fast and loose with truth, my sense of righteousness revolts: I echo the vigour of Shakspeare's protest, when he says, in *Richard the Second*, "He does me double wrong that wounds me with the flatteries of his tongue;"[2] and of Cowper's, when, in the "Table Talk," he cries: "The lie that flatters I abhor the most."[3] But it is not flattery to make mention of good in the presence of those in whom it is supposed to exist, and to direct their attention to traits within themselves and their race that qualify for exceptional service. Possession of power is ground of responsibility. To have our attention directed to powers within us that qualify for service is not to submit to the ignominy of flattery, but to be admonished concerning privilege and duty. In the greatest of his prose writings, his "Plea to the Lords and Commons of England for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing," Milton says:

> It is not in God's esteem the diminution of His glory, when honourable things are spoken of good men. Nevertheless there are three principal things, without which all praising is but court-

[1] *Venus and Adonis*, 989.

[2] III, 2.

[3] Compare MURRAY, English Dictionary *in loc.*

ship and flattery. First, when that only is praised which is solidly worth praise; next, when greatest likelihoods are brought that such things are truly and really in those persons to whom they are ascribed; the other, when he who praises, by showing that such his actual persuasion is of whom he writes, can demonstrate that he flatters not.[1]

In speaking honourably of the Oriental Consciousness I shall approve myself, under each one of Milton's three canons, to be innocent of the crime of flattery. I shall speak but of that which is in itself excellent and "solidly worth praise." I shall show that, in so far as I am competent to discern the elements of the Oriental Consciousness, these excellences are there; and, by the force of my appeal to these noblest elements in Indian life, for their employment on the side of Christianity, not in India's interest alone, but unto the advancement of the world, I shall amply demonstrate that I flatter not.[2]

Not less earnest than my disavowal of intention to commit the offence of flattering the East must be my answer to the suggestion, should it occur to any, that I am by inference depreciating Western thought and sensibility through dwelling upon the Elements of Sublimity in the Oriental Consciousness. It would be indeed a most untrustworthy inference that words spoken honourably of one must react to the discredit of another. If there be sublimity in the soul of the East, there is also sublimity, after its own kind, in the soul of the West. The ardour of my love and reverence for India is not obtained through any surrender of loyalty to the heritage of ideas and traits vouchsafed to me by my father's

[1] *Cf. Areopagitica* (ed. Cassell, London, 1904), p. 19.
[2] *Cf. ibid.*

fathers. The patronymic "Western" carries with it for me immortal privilege and honour. As, with years and research, I grow to comprehend the forces that have made the West and are now slowly transforming its civilisation, "the audacious speculation, the bold explanatory studies, the sound methods of criticism, the free range of the intellect over every field of knowledge,"[1] I rejoice to have the humblest share in this inheritance and pray to be worthy of it. Nor does it appear to me a disqualification for the service which I seek to render in India, that I have this Western patronymic and that I feel this love for the sources whence my being sprang. For by virtue thereof I acquire, through no merit of my own, the power, which, in the nature of the case, no Oriental can as fully possess—to stand apart from Eastern life and thinking, and, while loving it truly, to estimate it judicially. We are so constituted as often to be incapacitated for an impartial and interpretive judgment of our immediate conditions by the fact that we are immersed in those conditions and that our personality merges as an integral part of them. Mr. R. H. Hutton in his Essay on M. Renan's *Life of Jesus*, when speaking of the tender and beautiful dedication of the book by the author to his dearly loved sister, says: "These are lines which no man could trace without a deep conviction that his thoughts had been double-sifted through both a clear intellect and a clear spirit."[2] So one may say of the attempt to estimate the most subtle

[1] *Cf.* BENJ. KIDD, *Principles of Western Civilisation* (ed. London, 1902) p. 2.

[2] *Cf. Theological Essays* (3d ed., revised; London, 1888).

and profound elements in a specific form of race consciousness, for example, the Oriental Consciousness: no man can trace these elements unless his thought has been double-sifted through both a remote racial inheritance and a medium of love that has removed all prejudice and left only the desire to see the truth and to see it at its best.

To the true citizen of the world, and lover of his kind, no occupation is more delightful than study of the common nature of mankind. Himself exempt from an alienating spirit of separation and animated by humanistic aims, as his researches extend themselves to wider fields, his heart glows with delight on perceiving the vast unities of feeling and experience that bind together all the families of earth. Professor Tylor of Oxford says, in his work on *Primitive Culture:* "Surveyed in a broad view, the character and habit of mankind at once display that similarity and consistency of phenomena which led the Italian proverb-maker to declare: 'All the world is one country.'"[1] It is not too much to say that there are souls that experience a passionate joy in reflecting upon the oneness of the human race. There is a type of patriotism broader than love of one's nation. It is world-patriotism. It is marked by God like catholicity of affection toward the *race;* it says with the Italian proverb-maker: "All the world is one country;" and with St. Paul: "God hath made of one all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth;" and with Jesus Christ: "I would give my life for the life of the world." To what extent the East contains and ap-

[1] *Cf.* 4th ed., revised; London, 1903, Vol. I, p. 6.

proves this spirit of world-patriotism, this love of the world as one world, of humanity as one race, I have no certain knowledge. But that in the West are those for whom this world-love has dissolved the ordinary barriers and created a sense of universal kinship is true. I forget not that there are many in that Western world who in spirit and word and deed deny and oppose this sentiment. Some repudiate it with scorn, uttering opinions for which those who have a larger view of life may well rebuke them with honourable resentment. Recently an Englishman, whose name I may perhaps without impropriety withhold, has, in the introduction to a book on Eastern subjects, volunteered the following statements: "An American can never like anyone not of his own colour; he will never mix on a footing of equality with any other." These are idle, foolish, graceless words; the more regrettable because their author is a person of experience and distinction. So far as they are uncorrected by the spirit and life of those whom they misrepresent, they add to the long sad story of that past, which, as some of us dare to believe, is giving place to a broader and more worthy future.

The unity of the human world is, to those who are animated by the larger patriotism, an exhilarating thought. This unity is accomplished through diversity, not through uniformity. It presents to us the phenomenon of temperamental and psychic variation worked out upon a world-scale. We see the parable and prophecy of this variation in children of the same parents, within the small enclosure of a single family. Here are two brothers that were cradled, nurtured, educated together.

Sharing everything from infancy, growing up amidst the same scenes, beneath the same discipline, behold the irrepressible distinctions that appear in them from the beginning and deepen with time. One of these brothers is full of immediacy; eager, practical, self-reliant, self-assertive, born for mastery of visible forces. The other is calm, passive, indifferent to opportunity, living in the unseen, judging thought to be above action. Such, beneath one roof, may be the unlikeness of two lives, common fruit of one parentage. Yet together conceived of as forming a larger unity, they represent the totality of sources that produced them. So, in the greater family of man, are differences not more real in fact but more strongly developed by circumstances. The house brothers have lived within the same *entourage;* garbed alike, toned by one climate, speaking one mother tongue, subdued to conventional similitude by the autocracy of social custom. The race brothers have lived apart, as far as East from West. Separation and its subtle reaction, segregation, insidious differentia of zone and climate, divergent traditions, inertia of unrelated customs have accentuated their visible distinctions. To the uninstructed eye these race brothers seem to have been driven immeasurably apart; whereas, in fact, that is to say in spirit, they are not less allied than two brothers of opposite temperaments housed beneath one roof. For the race brothers, though physically and intellectually remote and dissimilar, are bound in the one great bundle of humanity's life, and collectively they represent the sum of influences that have made humanity and that are essential to the completeness of humanity.

Beneath what I am now saying lies a fundamental fact of singular interest. It is the fact of race consciousness. Individual consciousness is immediate knowledge that one has of one's present thoughts, feelings, and purposes: it is knowledge, through testimony within oneself, of impressions, thoughts, feelings that make up conscious existence. Possibly it is this fact of individual consciousness more than any other fact that imparts a certain mysterious dignity to every human life. As we look upon one another, we remember that, behind all outward phenomena of speech or conduct, dwells in each, as in a curtained shrine, the self-knowing soul, holding counsel with itself, taking knowledge of itself inwardly as an entity separable from the whole outlying universe. But this function of individual consciousness is not wholly esoteric and impenetrable. In a sense it must disclose itself through reactions upon outward personality. The saying of the proverb-maker in the Old Testament: "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he,"[1] proclaims one of the most formidable laws of our being. As we know ourselves in the actuality of inward life, so, as by an irresistible force of self-projection, we make involuntary self-revelations of our consciousness, whereby others who study us closely may know us as we are.

The nature that is essentially untrue, that gives witness within itself to fraud or corruptness, or dark passions of sinister ambition, will, in the course of time, depict that inward insincerity in wavering eye, lines of untruth, or shadow of animalism upon the tell-tale countenance. The soul that gives witness unto itself in the

[1] Prov. 23:7.

inner shrine of consciousness to noble and ingenuous motive, to reverence for truth, to affiliation with God, to honourable love for man, will bear this witness outwardly, in eyes that give forth the radiance of inward light, in the calm brow exempt from shame, in the charm of righteousness, which is the white garment for the white soul. Once, in early days of the Christian Society, certain Apostles were discharging their ministry with such winsome strength and gentleness that spectators were astonished, knowing them to be unlearned and ignorant men; and it is touchingly affirmed by the narrator: "They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus."[1] It is an example of the involuntary self-revelations of consciousness. The thought of Christ was filling the souls of these men; in the shrine of consciousness they knew themselves to be governed by His example, allied to His cause; and what filled them inwardly controlled them outwardly.

But, in our study of human life, we have grown to see that there is race consciousness, as well as individual consciousness. That faculty which we attribute to the individual, namely, recognition within itself of the actuality of impressions, thoughts, and feelings that make up conscious being, we may attribute as a collective faculty to an aggregate of men, and speak of national consciousness, race consciousness, or, as in the present instance, Oriental Consciousness as distinguished from Occidental Consciousness. That there should be certain characteristic methods of thought, objects of interest, points of view controlling Oriental mentality, interest-

[1] Acts 4:13.

ing the Oriental soul, and thereby distinguishing it, in a measure, from the type of mentality and of soul-interest common throughout the West, is the fact that has appealed to me supremely, that challenges my closest attention, that brings me a second time to India in the attempt to understand its import.

The author of the book, *Primitive Culture*, says: "That a whole nation should have a special dress, special tools and weapons, special laws of marriage and property, special moral and religious doctrines is a remarkable fact, which we notice so little because we have lived all our lives in the midst of it."[1] Professor Tylor further says, and the remark is one full of suggestion for my present purpose:

> The quality of mankind, which tends most to make the systematic study of civilisation possible, is that remarkable tacit consensus or agreement which so far induces whole populations to unite in the use of the same language, to follow the same religion and customary law, to settle down to the same general level of art and knowledge. It is this state of things which makes it so far possible to ignore exceptional facts, and to describe nations by a sort of general average. There is found to be such regularity in the composition of societies of men, that we can drop individual differences out of sight and thus can generalise on the arts and opinions of whole nations, just as, when looking down upon an army from a hill, we forget the individual soldier, whom, in fact, we can scarce distinguish in the mass, while we see each regiment as an organised body, spreading or concentrating, moving in advance or in retreat.[2]

It is well to be assured by so high an authority that the principle of generalisation as applied to nations is

[1] *Cf. op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 12.

[2] *Cf. ibid.*, pp. 10, 11.

scientifically valid. For my interest in these lectures is founded on a generalisation far wider than any suggested by the learned author whom I have just quoted. My present interest lies not in the fact that a whole nation should have special dress, or special tools and weapons, or special laws of marriage and property; not even in the fact that a whole nation should have special moral and religious doctrines. Striking as are these examples of similarity and consistency in social phenomena, they are but suggestions of a greater fact, the proportions of which are as majestic as its significance for the world is profound. It is the fact of a distinctive type of human self-realisation which I have called the Oriental Consciousness.

The East is the home of many nations differing one from another in language, in modes of dress, in forms of tools and weapons, in laws of marriage and property, in moral and religious doctrines. Like the West, whether more or less conspicuously, the East bears the revolutionary marks of time, its upheavals, its cleavages, its reconstructions. Yet the East has a spirit that is all its own, a spirit that broods over its multitudinous life like the soft atmosphere of gentle love not unmingled with sorrow. In that far-off land where my home is, amidst the beauteous valleys and mountain ranges of Northern America, there occurs late in the autumn of each year a phenomenon that we cherish as one of the loveliest appearances of nature. The summer has long since passed away; the harvests are all garnered, the autumn is far spent, the frosts have turned the forests to colour masses of crimson and russet and gold,

the first premonitory blasts of winter have sounded through the groves, heralds of ice and snow; when suddenly, for a few brief days, there comes a great calm in heaven and on earth, a celestial armistice. The wind is hushed; the severity of frost is withdrawn; the sun breathes into the atmosphere fragrance and warmth; hill and vale, forest and river are wrapped together in one mantle of dreamlike stillness. Rugged outlines of nature are softened; the din of cities is forgotten; zest of action gives place to thought; calm and holy sadness reigns amid the beauty. For a few days this unwonted silence and peace of nature continue, then the loud challenge of the winter sounds and life resumes its conflict, its struggles, its constructive toil. In our country we are wont to call that hush of nature "Indian summer." Thus does one of our own writers describe that enchanting yet pathetic season: "The warm, late days of Indian summer came in, dreamy and calm and still, with just frost enough to crisp the ground of a morning but with warm traces of benign and sunny hours at noon."[1] The name Indian summer has poetic reference to the aborigines of America. It is interesting here to remember that those aborigines were erroneously called "Indians" by the Spanish navigators of the fifteenth century, who, in reaching America, supposed that they had touched the shore of India. I know of nothing in nature that more nobly typifies the spirit of the Oriental Consciousness than that phenomenon of the Western year which, as if by prophetic instinct, we have called Indian summer. That brief period of

[1] MRS. H. B. STOWE, *Oldtown*, p. 337.

repose in nature, of dreamlike calm, of antithesis to the stern, cold, eager Western winter, of pathos that is not like grief but rather like thought which lies too deep for tears, suggests the mental atmosphere which, not for a few brief days, but eternally, spreads over the expanse of Eastern life. The East has known with more intimacy, if it be possible, than the West those peace destroyers—war, upheaval of dynasties, acute forms of social distress. The East has been called more often than the West to submit to injustice, to endure the sickness of hope deferred, to bow the shoulder to burdens unrighteously imposed. Yet whatever contentions and upheavals on the surface of society, whatever blasts of plague or famine, desolating homes and hearths, whatever injustice or oppression; in the upper atmosphere of the Oriental Consciousness there abides the calm, the sadness, and the sunlight of an Indian summer of the soul. Who can interpret it? Who has the right to attempt to interpret it? Above all, what right have I, a son of the West, to essay that sacred task? I have no right, unless it be that love and reverence give right.

As I draw near to discern the elements of the Oriental Consciousness, I find among them those that produce on me impressions of sublimity. Not without reflection do I use that term "sublimity." It is one of the noblest of words. Like the word "flattery" of which I spoke earlier in this lecture, its origin in our English tongue is unknown. The ignoble word "flattery," like a harmful reptile, glides into the language from an undiscovered nest. The august word "sub-

limity," like one of your own Himalayan mountain peaks, rises on the field of English speech into the upper air of truth; its summit crowned with light, its base lost in the haze of distance. It signifies that which strikes the mind with a sense of grandeur or power. The invariable condition of the emotion of sublimity is vastness, power or intensity in the objects, material or moral, that produce it. I believe that in the Occidental Consciousness as well as in the Oriental Consciousness there are elements of sublimity. It is not my province to deal with the former in these lectures, but the time will come, I trust, when some mind, stronger and more skilled than my own, shall undertake in India an unprejudiced analysis of qualities in the consciousness of the West, which, when rightly understood, when seen in their ultimate relations to the soul, when studied in the spirit of love, may be declared, in the high court of India's most critical opinion, not unworthy to be called sublime.

From that most ancient and most complex psychological mystery, which I have called the Oriental Consciousness, I select four elements, each of which produces upon my Western powers of apprehension the impression of sublimity. They are these: *The Contemplative Life; The Presence of the Unseen; Aspiration toward Ultimate Being; The Sanctions of the Past.* If I venture to speak of these, it is not with the false assurance of him who fancies that he has mastered the inner meanings for the East of those things whereof he speaks, but with reserve and modesty mingled with reverence and admiration.

The Contemplative Life is the life that is ruled by thought; that esteems thought to be the treasure whose price is above rubies, the honourable portion for which wealth and worldly power may not be taken in exchange. In the creation of God the mind is the most beautiful thing that He has made. "He hath made," says an ancient writer, "everything beautiful in his time."[1] This is true. Each object in nature, from the most minute to the most mighty, so long as it retains its normal place, function, and form, retains inherent grace and symmetry which is God's sign-manual of beauty stamped upon every one of His innumerable works. Each flower, each living creature, each cloud that sails in the sky, each star that shines in the firmament is clothed in the beauty of perfect workmanship, perfect serviceableness for its appointed end of being. But the beauty of the mind is unique; there is nothing in the universe like it, save only the Eternal Mind, of which it is the offspring and reflection. Star, cloud, living creature, flower are passive, limited, fixed; unreasoning items in the immense totality of nature. The mind is active, free, capable of wandering at its pleasure through the whole universe and far up into the awful heights of Deity. The mind is gifted with originating powers; it creates, and its creations, like your own Vedas, may become immortal. The human hand is an extraordinary adjunct of man's being. To what multitudinous functions it lends itself, along the various avenues of action! To what precision of movement it may attain! Now it grasps the weapon of destruction

[1] Eccles. 3:11.

or defence; now it wields the implement of household industry or the tool of agriculture; now it shapes the delicate instrument of science; now it lifts the brush of the painter, the chisel of the sculptor; now it wakes the voice of the harp or the harmonies of the organ; now, taking the pen of the writer, it records history, transcribes poetry, or signs away the destinies of nations. Yet what is the hand, with all its splendid functions, but the servant of the mind! Let the mind fail and the hand is impotent. The mind need not be subdued by infelicities of earthly destiny. So long as consciousness and the true balance of reason endure, prosperity, adversity, wealth, poverty, pain, sorrow, injustice, oppression may be kept in the outer courts of our being, nor ever permitted to control that sanctuary far within where thought has set its altar and prepared its incense. "Stone walls do not a prison make; nor iron bars a cage." Ignoring the limitation of the external, the mind, like an untamed eagle, spreads its pinions and is off "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

The Contemplative Life is the life that puts thought above action, the invisible above the visible, as the major interest of existence: that pays homage first to the mind and the things of the mind; afterward to the body and the things of the body. The life of action is not incompatible with the life of contemplation, but subordinate to it. And especially is the life of materialistic action subordinate: the struggle of competitive acquisition, lust after riches, pride of display, arrogance of possession, scheming ingenuity to override the inter-

ests or the efforts of another, so as to accumulate wealth. From this the Contemplative Life turns wearily aside, asking only to be left at leisure to think its way onward to the goal of God. May I say that I seem to have found in the East the natural home of the Contemplative Life? Its value, its appropriateness for man, its ennobling harmony with man's nature and destiny, its abiding satisfactions as against feverish struggle for things and short-lived enjoyment of them, many in the West have known. And many more in these latter days, jaded with the quest of the visible, are seeking the path of contemplation. But behind you and your seers lies the long Indian summer of the soul, thousands of years of the Contemplative Life. It has given you certain elements of personality, and certain qualifications for world-efficiency which misguided imitation of our Western ways could only imperil. You have been Orientals since the dawn of the world. Continue to be Orientals for ever, till the world's last twilight closes in the final darkness. Cling to the Contemplative Life: your glorious heritage, your peculiar strength. It has given you elements of personality of which the West stands in need and shall one day come seeking at your hand. It has given you repose, gentleness, patience, gravity, noble indifference alike to material possession and material privation, eternal remembrance of things that eye hath not seen nor ear heard, which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

The Presence of the Unseen seems to me, as I study Indian personality, to be another element in Oriental Consciousness that is worthy to be called sublime.

Visibility and invisibility are states or conditions that have played an enormous part in the history of human thought and human action. There have been the physically blind, blind from their mother's womb, to whom the whole span of earthly being was a problem of invisibility, unrelieved by one ray of light, or one outline of form. There have been the mentally blind, in whom the spiritual eye was sealed, and for whom the whole of existence was to touch, to taste, to handle palpable objects of a visible world. There have been the enlightened, to whom the visible was but the porch and entrance way to the Temple of Invisible Reality. Innumerable companies of these enlightened have felt that the one unquestionable Reality is invisible; and, holding this faith in their several ways, some as Hindus, some as Christians, have aspired to that end of which St. Paul has spoken: "We look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."[1] There is an ancient Christian Creed, framed in Asia Minor in the fourth century, the opening words of which are these: "I believe in One God, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and of all things, visible and invisible." This Creed of Nicæa, framed in what Europeans speak of as the Nearer East, and affected by influences partly Eastern, partly Western, gives us, as it were, a digest of the religious consciousness of the world on this subject. God is regarded as the Maker of all things, "visible and invisible." You are well aware that the general

[1] II Cor. 4:18.

tendency of Western thinking is to recognise with more or less absoluteness the reality of the phenomenal universe with the countless distinctions of finite souls and finite objects; a recognition which, I regret to say, in popular religious thinking of the West has become at times a form of dualism. You are equally aware that the immemorial thought of India emphasises the reality of the Invisible Absolute, while to some extent admitting the distinction of the individual soul and its phenomenal environment, but regarding it under the terms "Maya" or "Avidya." A very able Hindu writer in the *Hindustan Review* says: "This distinction is indeed recognised in Higher Hinduism, but in this system it is spoken of as a mystery and receives the much misunderstood name of 'Maya' or 'Avidya,' terms which Western scholars readily but wrongly render into 'illusion.' Really, 'Maya' and 'Avidya' are names of a mystery which our philosophers clearly admit is inscrutable." Without going into this very interesting subject, which I have the greatest desire to investigate further under competent Eastern guides, my purpose in referring to it at all is to point out that the age-long tendency of Indian thinking to clothe itself in forms of monism has overspread the East with an impressive sense of the presence of the Unseen. It is not strange that the East has been historically the birth-place of every one of the great religions of the world, and the natural fountain and origin of the world's religious experience. That this religious experience has undergone stages of development with which I personally could not be satisfied, as, for example, in some of the forms and

phenomena of animism, which, as a matter of fact, seem to me to have been greatly influenced from non-Aryan sources, is not a matter germane to my present purpose. I wish to testify that, as I come into the East once more, I am more than ever conscious of the fact that here the presence of the Unseen is realised. That fact is inherently sublime. It bears witness to the indestructible seed of divinity within the finite soul. It is the refusal of man to be put off with the husk of physical existence, because the eternal wheat of immortality is his portion. May the day never come when the East, inebriated with the wine of modern culture, and dazzled by the appliances of modern civilisation, shall move from her high seat of vision, forget her prophets of the invisible, barter her great inheritance in the Unseen, and bow down before perishable idols of present-day materialism, unconsecrated gods of a passing hour!

In the Oriental Consciousness there lives another element of true sublimity, of which I may not speak save in words measured and restrained by reverence. *Aspiration toward Ultimate Being* is the eternal hunger and hope in the soul of the East. The East may erect temples and offer sacrifices to particular deities; it may enlarge its pantheon with deified saints and heroes; it may build up and sustain the complex theologies and rituals which are to-day popular forms of worship for the multitude. But the sublimity of the Oriental Consciousness is found in its tremendous outreach of desire beyond these provisional forms and personages, yes, beyond all that eye can discern or mind conceive, toward an ultimate and inscrutable Reality of Being—an ocean

of fathomless life in which, and in which alone, vexations of the finite spirit are quenched in unutterable satisfaction, lost in unimaginable blessedness. Words fail me to depict the sublimity of these conceptions of the final solution of our existence, or to measure the depth and dignity of a race consciousness in which, through a thousand generations, the mystical sense of potential oneness with Ultimate Being could survive divisive tendencies of polytheism and powerful antagonisms of dissenting philosophies. I am not attempting to pass any value-judgment upon the actual influence upon life and character of this Aspiration toward Ultimate Being. I am not considering the bearing upon it of wide ranges of Indian theological divergence touching the personality or the impersonality of God; I am not contrasting it with the Buddhistic thought-system of the Farther East, wherein negation of existence supplies to consciousness a goal of passionless sublimity. My observations turn not on the content or tendency of any of these conceptions; but on their inherent grandeur and unworldliness, on their dignity as protests against materialism, on their sweep and range like searchlights in the sky above the pastures and palaces of earth, upward and outward into unsurveyed fields of higher knowledge. A great English poet, gazing on King's College Chapel, Cambridge, wrote: "They dreamt not of a perishable home who thus could build!" So may one exclaim who considers the scale of grandeur on which are built these conceptions of Ultimate Being and these aspirations, whether for consummation or for extinction, that have given wings of high desire to

the Oriental Consciousness. Souls that can erect such fabrics of hope, and lift heavenward such towers of spiritual longing have proved themselves sublime!

I close this lecture with a reference to one other element of sublimity in the Oriental Consciousness, of which I hope to speak at greater length in the last lecture of the course. I refer to Eastern *Reverence for the Sanctions of the Past.* In the year 1902, when I was first in India, a suggestive English writer, Mr. Benjamin Kidd, produced a book under the title, *Principles of Western Civilisation.* Its purpose is to show that, with the close of the nineteenth century, there has come in Europe and America "a great change in the opinions and modes of thinking of society." This change is the precursor of a period of social and political reconstruction. It has lifted Western society as a whole to "an entirely different plane." It consists in the fact that all social thinking, in every department, ethics, politics, philosophy, economics, religion, is passing from under control of the past and is coming under control of the future.

> It is [Mr. Kidd affirms] the meaning, not of the relation of the present to the past, but of the relation of the present to the future, to which all other meanings are subordinate and which controls all the ultimate tendencies of the process of progress in which the West is living. The theory of social progress in the West hitherto has been the struggle of an ascendant present against a hindering past, in short, a theory of movement toward a fixed social and political condition in which the present shall be completely emancipated from the past in conditions in which the gratification of the desires, and the furtherance of the interests, of the component individuals shall have been made as complete as possible.

But now it is "the shadow of the infinite future which rests on the process of progress. It is to the future and not to the past that the theory of development has now become primarily related." What is taking place in the West is "a shifting of the centre of significance in thought." As to the immensity of the changes involved by reason of this shifting, Mr. Kidd does not, perhaps, overstate the matter in using these strong words:

> Systems of theory that have nourished the intellectual life of the [Western] world for centuries have become in our time in large part obsolete. They may retain for a space the outward appearance of authority. But the foundations upon which they rested have been bodily undermined. It is only a question of time till the ruin which has overtaken them will have become a commonplace of Western knowledge.[1]

In the last lecture of this course I shall speak further of this change occurring in the West, the nature of which I regard Mr. Kidd to have divined with much sagacity. I shall try to explain to you both its peril and its promise. When I shall have done so, my friends, you will understand why it is that I speak with emotion of that element of sublimity in Oriental Consciousness which I have called Eastern Reverence for the Sanctions of the Past. I do not discuss at the present moment whether in all respects your past, great as it has been, should be permitted to control your present as much as your reverence allows it to do. I do not raise the question here of how far "the shadow of the future," as Mr. Kidd calls it, may be invoked to fall upon you even as already it has fallen upon us. But one thing I affirm with confidence

[1] *Cf. op. cit.* (ed. London, 1902), pp. 1–12, 194–238.

and with admiration which I do not seek to disguise: the sublimity of that element in the Eastern mind which tenaciously, proudly, reverently esteems its great inheritances, treasures its ancestral classics, keeps faith with its forefathers, sits unwearied, after three thousand years, at the living springs of its primeval hopes. If the watchword of the West is *Progress*, the watchword of the East is *Faith!*

Forgive me, Gentlemen, if in any wise I have presumed upon the right of friendship in speaking thus ingenuously and unguardedly of Elements of Sublimity in the Oriental Consciousness. If I have committed a fault in so doing, the assurance of a generous motive may, perchance, be accepted as an atonement. I have seen many beautiful things in India, wrought by art or conferred by Nature; but nothing so beautiful as these traits of consciousness: the Contemplative Life, the Presence of the Unseen, Aspiration for Ultimate Being, Reverence for the Sanctions of the Past. You have a rich inheritance of blessing, and, permit me to add, a solemn weight of responsibility. In our Holy Scriptures we find a pregnant saying of Christ. I am moved to quote it as I close: "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."[1]

[1] Luke 12:48.

LECTURE TWO

THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT IN THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

With deep interest and hopefulness I approach the subject of the evening, which is, "The Mystical Element in the Christian Religion." My interest in this subject is the result both of investigation and of experience. My hopefulness in presenting it to this thoughtful assembly is grounded in the abundant evidence furnished by the history of religion in India that the mystical element ever has been and now is esteemed by you as precious, even as indispensable. I am not aware of any more direct and satisfactory statement of the truth that lies at the heart of my subject than is contained in words spoken some months since by a distinguished citizen of Bombay, Hon. Mr. Justice Chandavarkar: "Religious life is only possible when one gets to the centre of life, which is God Himself." A whole volume might amplify, but could not more clearly convey, the fundamental fact in mysticism. I find the words quoted in one of your very able liberal papers, *The Indian Social Reformer*, as part of an address delivered before a Prayer Union of the Theistic Church. In the course of his address the honourable and learned Justice is reported to have said, with regard to the simplicity of true religion:

> The sun rises every morning without tom tom or noise, and goes its regular rounds with patience and quietness. The flowers,

the blossoms, the seasons, all come in their proper time without advertisement. There is quiet simplicity about nature, which is not marred by even so much as a show of hurry, disorder or bustle. So also the man of simple life goes about his work in the most uncomplaining way. He is faithful to his Maker. God works in the simplest manner, and the man who leads a simple life imitates God in this respect. Simplicity is not ostentatious, nor is there any gorgeousness about it. It is neither showy nor disorderly, but truthful and faithful to the original. In order therefore that our lives may become simple, it is necessary for us to discipline them. Religious life is only possible when one gets to the centre of life, which is God Himself.

I trust that the author of these true and beautiful words will not object to have me make them the gateway by which I enter the subject to be discussed in your hearing to-night: "The Mystical Element in the Christian Religion." For it is only by means of this discipline of simplicity, this effort to proceed beyond the formal and the external, and to attain the blessed estate of a humble and quiet mind before God, that anyone, by the pathway of the Christian religion, can come to that inner, mystical experience of the Divine, which the honourable Justice has happily described, as "getting to the centre of life, which is God Himself."

One may say that no single phenomenon of the religious consciousness has been so universally shared by the scattered members of the human family as the phenomenon of mysticism. It is one of the most convincing evidences of the essential unity of the human race that, in all ages and in all lands, we find the same, characteristic movement of the religious consciousness—the effort "to get to the centre of life, which is God Him-

self." There is recorded a splendid utterance of Christ in which He depicts a general, final gathering from all quarters of the earth of those who shall be found worthy to sit down in the Kingdom of God. "I say unto you, that many shall come from the East and West and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of heaven."[1] One seeks for some common experience of the religious consciousness in that conglomerate assembly whereby it could be unified. One finds it in their common mystical desire, originating, as has been said, "in that which is the raw material of all religion, and perhaps of all philosophy and art as well, namely, that dim consciousness of the *beyond*, which is part of our nature as human beings."[2] Out of that dim, rudimentary consciousness of the beyond has grown first the groping yearning, then the deliberate desire, then the studious effort, at length the glorious achievement: "to get to the centre of life, which is God Himself." Apparently every conceivable attempt has been made to define the nature and import of this action of consciousness in which (how beautiful is the thought!) we taste the joys and sorrows of the same experience, be we Occidentals or Orientals. An English scholar thus defines it—and the definition is one that must, I think, appeal to many of my learned hearers: "Mysticism may be defined as the attempt to realise the presence of the Living God in the soul and in nature; or, more generally, as the attempt to realise, in thought and feeling, the immanence of the temporal in

[1] Matt. 8:11.

[2] *Cf.* INGE, *Christian Mysticism* (ed. London, 1899), p. 5.

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the eternal and of the eternal in the temporal,"[1] that is to say, the attempt to realise our abiding in the Living God, and the abiding of the Living God in us.

A German scholar thus speaks:

> Mysticism is the immediate feeling of the unity of the self with God. It is nothing therefore but the fundamental feeling of religion, the religious life at its very heart and centre. But what makes the mystical a special tendency inside religion is the endeavour to fix the immediateness of the life in God as such, and find a permanent abode in the abstract inwardness of the life of pious feeling.[2]

Here is the testimony of a Scotch scholar:

> Mysticism is a phase of thought, or rather perhaps of feeling, that appears in connection with the endeavour of the human mind to grasp the Divine essence, or the ultimate reality of things, and to enjoy the blessedness of actual communion with the highest. God ceases to be an object, and becomes an experience.[3]

And here is the corroborating voice of a great scholar of Northern Africa centuries ago:

> Oh! God, Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our souls are restless till they rest in Thee.[4]

Thus, approaching by many paths, the world's seekers after the higher things are drawn to a common centre and find a common basis of thought and feeling, standing upon which in the spirit of love they become intelligible to one another and each is able to comprehend and, if it may so be, to appropriate the contribution that the other is prepared to make, whether

[1] *Cf.* INGE, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
[2] *Cf.* PFLEIDERER, *in loc.*
[3] SETH, *in loc.*
[4] *Cf.* AUGUSTINE, *in loc.*

to theory or to experience. I shall find no opponent in India when I affirm that the noblest effort man is capable of making and the most exalted experience man is capable of assimilating are, alike, connected with the fundamental fact of mysticism. And to this I attribute the eternal freshness and charm of the great mystical conceptions: the abiding of our souls in the Living God, and the abiding of the Living God in us. These ideas possess immortal newness, immortal power of delight. They return to our spirits like the celestial calm of evening after a day of toil and struggle. In the fierce encounters of noon-day, in the strife of tongues, in the chafing of life's burden upon the shoulders, our heart was heavy. But now the day of labour is ended; the dust of traffic falls away, and with it the galling memory of trouble. "With hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and bodies washed with pure water," we rest in the shadow of evening as in the secret place of the Most High. Calmness, coolness, the soft light of stars speak to us day by day, year by year, the message of refreshment that never grows old. So comes back to us for ever, as we proceed along life's pathway, bearing the burden and heat of the day, the ineffable refreshment of our life in God and His Life in us. Dimly and partially we may have discerned it, our eyes being holden through fear or sin or ignorance; timidly and doubtingly we may have tasted it, our hand dreading to lift so fair a chalice to the lip; yet we have seen enough to know that this is the True Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world; we have tasted enough to know that this is the Living Water, of which, if a man

drink, he shall never thirst. Beautifully did another Scotchman say:

> It is the peculiar gift of these mystical thoughts that they lie at the basis of all systems of theology, and appeal with a strange certainty to men and women who humbly seek to follow the Master along many a path. The systems are born, grow old and perish; but the mystical theology is immortal and omnipresent. "You may to-day," says Maurice Maeterlinck, "pass through the infirmaries of the human soul, where truths once young and beautiful come to die, and you will not find a single mystical thought there. For the truths of mysticism do not grow old and die."[1]

It is my privilege to speak to-night, and in my next two lectures, of some of these ever-young and inherently immortal truths of mysticism, as they are found and expressed in the Christian religion. As I essay to do so, I remember that while the mystical attitude, which is the aspiration of the soul for immediate access to God, has been more universally shared by the scattered members of the human family than any other phenomenon of the religious consciousness, it has not failed to encounter its opponents and its foes, who have raised against it formidable objections. It is germane to my present purpose to note two classes of objections that have been raised against the mystical attitude: those directed in general against the primary assumption that direct contact of the human spirit with the Divine Spirit is possible, in the form of experiences that pro-

[1] *Cf.* T. M. Lindsay, Introduction to *Golden Thoughts from the Book of Spiritual Poverty*, by Dr. Johann Tauler (Glasgow, Bryce & Son, n. d.).

duce higher knowledge than is attainable through the senses; and secondly, those objections that are directed in particular against that form of mysticism which is most characteristic of the Oriental Consciousness: namely, Aspiration toward Ultimate Being. A few words concerning each of these classes of objections cannot fail to help us to better mutual understanding of the subject before us this evening: the Mystical Element in the Christian Religion.

A general objection against the primary assumption involved in the mystical attitude has been made by many modern scholars, and continues to be made in high quarters of Western intellectualism. That primary assumption is that the human spirit has both the right and the power to come into immediate relations with God, wherein knowledge is attained, joy is experienced, strength is born. This knowledge, joy, and strength are of a degree and of a kind that come not through ordinary operations of the senses, which go out as our agents into the phenomenal world, gather their impressions there and report them back for classification and application by the rational faculty. In other words, the first principle, the Magna Charta of mysticism, is that you and I, being in our spirits the offspring of God, may attain communion with Him that is not mediated by Churches, institutions, ceremonies, and priests, but is direct and absolute; we abiding in Him, He abiding in us. Here, on the threshold of mysticism, strong objectors armed with strong objections are planting themselves. Examples should be given on the nature of these objections in view of the responsible sources

whence they proceed.[1] In his book on *Degeneration* Professor Nordau appears to identify all mysticism with more or less acute disorders of the brain. He says:

> The word mysticism describes a state of mind in which the subject imagines that he perceives or divines unknown and inexplicable relations among phenomena, discerns in things hints at mysteries, and regards them as symbols by which a dark power seeks to unveil, or at least seeks to indicate, all sorts of marvels. It is always connected with strong emotional excitement. Unrestricted play of association, the result of an exhausted or degenerate brain, gives rise to mysticism. Since the mystic cannot express his cloudy thoughts in ordinary language, he loves mutually exclusive expressions. Mysticism blurs outlines, and makes the transparent opaque.[2]

I need hardly point out how wide of the mark are these words, as a characterisation of true mysticism. What they describe is brain lesion, cerebral fever, pathological ecstasy. They have nothing in common with the thought of one of the greatest of the Christian mystics, St. Paul, who was also one of the most sane and efficient labourers for his fellow-men: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me."[3] They have nothing in common with the mysticism of Christ, as He says: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall

[1] I am under obligation here and elsewhere to Rev. William Ralph Inge, M.A., formerly Fellow and Tutor of Hertford College, Oxford, now Vicar of All Saints, Ennismore Gardens, London, for valuable suggestions contained in his Bampton Lectures (1899) on "Christian Mysticism;" and for his "List of Definitions of "Mysticism" and "Mystical Theology" in Appendix A of that work.

[2] *Op. cit.*

[3] Gal. 2: 20.

see God."[1] Another objector of distinction is Professor Hermann, whose words are of more force, in the premises, than those of Professor Nordau inasmuch as they approach nearer to an apprehension of the true mysticism, while involving a no less strenuous denial of its validity.

> The essence of mysticism [says Hermann] lies in this: when the influence of God upon the soul is sought and found solely in an inward experience of the individual; when certain excitements of the emotions are taken, with no further question, as evidence that the soul is possessed by God; when at the same time nothing external to the soul is consciously and clearly perceived and firmly grasped; when no thoughts that elevate the spiritual life are aroused by the positive contents of an idea that rules the soul—then that is the piety of mysticism. Mysticism is not that which is common to all religion, but a particular species, namely a piety which feels that which is historical in the positive religion to be burdensome, and so rejects it.

It would seem impossible to make a more thoroughgoing misinterpretation of the inherent qualities of a force which, above all others, has determined the course of religious history and generated the apostles of every great faith. Objectors like these and many others that I might cite appear to be governed by a private conception of the nature of the human soul and of its normal modes of consciousness. The equivalent of religion, for them, appears to be a phenomenon independent of God (I shall not call it atheistical), which ignores the soul's relationship to God, and sweeps away as unwholesome, if not irrational, those activities, aspirations, and states of experience which arise out of and are the essen-

[1] Matt. 5:8.

tial concomitants of that relationship. Nothing is left, so far as one can see, for those who persistently disown man's perpetual and unconquerable conviction that he can, in spirit, be directly connected with the Eternal Consciousness and Will, but what has been accurately described by Pfleiderer as an "irreligious moralism." It is well for us to remember that there are these objectors to that which seems to us, my brethren, our most sacred and inalienable possession, the right of access to God, and of God's access to us, without intermediary. The great service rendered to us by these objectors is to put us on our guard in the exercise of our precious right; that there be no shadow cast upon the purity and rationality of our mysticism; that there be nothing in it to justify these criticisms; nothing unseemly, nothing pathological or of the nature of madness; nothing inconsistent with personal morality, and the higher grade of social efficiency.

In addition to this general objection lodged against the whole phenomenon of mysticism I wish also to take account of that, which in particular, is directed against the form of mysticism most characteristic of the Oriental Consciousness: namely, Aspiration toward Ultimate Being. This I have described in my last lecture as "the eternal hunger and hope in the soul of the East," and I have referred to it as one of the elements of sublimity in the Oriental Consciousness. Remembering these allusions, you will not mistake the spirit in which I speak of this matter. If I may adopt the language of one of your own countrymen, whom I know well personally and who has written extensively in the field

of philosophical Hinduism, the nature of this aspiration is "to see the formless Being of the Deity, in the regions of pure consciousness beyond the veil of thought."[1] Advancing to this, one passes beyond; coming out, as it were, on the farther side of knowledge in regions where all distinctions vanish, where the bondage of ignorance at length is broken, and the soul, which is distinct from mind, body, and all else, realises that emancipation as the reward of intellectual labour. In this aspiration I have found, as I shall explain more fully in a later lecture, one of the secrets of sublimity in Eastern Consciousness; yet at the same time I can understand and feel the force of objections brought against this manner of thinking by minds so powerful and so incapable of animosity that none here would wish to discredit their value-judgments. These objections are of various kinds: some object to the trend of this mystical Aspiration toward Ultimate Being, because it involves deliberate aversion of the mind from, and shutting of the eyes against, external things, persons, and movements, through which, it is claimed, God has spoken quite as impressively as through His subjective disclosures in the individual consciousness. The soul thus becomes shut in upon itself: deprived, through deliberate self-seclusion, of innumerable influences that would tend to chasten, enrich, and illuminate it. Through this privation it is made to diminish, as it were, in volume and opulence of experience, to miss the deeper secret of its own personality, which lies in its profound interrelation with other personalities, and

[1] Sri Parananda (*nom-de-plume*).

so actually to lose, instead of gain, the goal; to reach which, namely, full knowledge of God, it has given up all else. I am well aware of the answer you would naturally make to this objection, nevertheless it is one that has occurred to a great number of strong minds in sympathy with mysticism; and the more precious we esteem any truth to be, the more wise are we to weigh all that can be said against it, as well as in its favour.

Another objection brought against Eastern Aspiration toward Ultimate Being is that the logic of negation, which is the process of approach, under this system of thinking, to the metaphysical Absolute, or God, not only empties God but empties the soul of those qualities which our best natural instincts teach us to admire, to love, and to retain. This objection, which certainly is one not unworthy of notice, is stated concisely and with force by a member of the University of Oxford:

> Let me try [says the writer] to state the argument and its consequences in a clear form. Since God is the Infinite, and the Infinite is the antithesis of the finite, every attribute which may be affirmed of a finite being may be safely denied of God. Hence God can only be *described* by negatives; He can only be *discovered* by stripping off all the qualities and attributes which veil Him; He can only be *reached* by divesting ourselves of all the distinctions of personality, and sinking or rising into our uncreated nothingness; and He can only be *imitated* by aiming at an abstract spirituality, the passionless "apathy" of an universal which is nothing in particular.[1]

In my next two lectures I shall have occasion to refer repeatedly to this subject, which has so enormously influenced Eastern religious consciousness, and to show

[1] *Cf.* INGE, *op. cit.*, p. iii.

wherein lies its essential sublimity, although the existing form and implications of this yearning for knowledge of Ultimate Being are open to the objections that I have cited.

Of one other objection I must speak in order to do justice to this part of my subject. It is objected that concentration of the mind upon salvation to be accomplished through higher esoteric knowledge reacts unfavourably upon the moral sense of the individual, makes him indifferent to the actuality of right and wrong, causes an ethical colour-blindness to steal upon him, thereby striking a double blow at his usefulness and also at his happiness. To what extent, if any, this objection is well founded I am not now intending to discuss. Certainly I am not prepared to affirm, hastily, that the judgment *is* well founded. Professor Deussen of Keil, in his recent work[1] on *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, a work which, Indians will agree, seems to be conceived in the spirit of a chivalrous seeker after truth, has taught all Europeans who are teachable, not to pronounce hasty judgments on systems of thought, the real significance of which, both intellectually and ethically, is only just beginning, if indeed it be already begun, to be understood by the mind of the West. Yet obviously, this objection, lodged as it is on the ground of ethics, is one, the validity of which ought not to go unchallenged by men of integrity and honour. And if it were, even in the least degree, valid, the willing alteration of whatsoever in the system of philosophy was

[1] English translation by Rev. A. S. Geden, M.A. (Edinburgh, T. and T. Clark, 1906).

found to militate against ethics would, I am sure, be merely the disclosure of one more of the elements of sublimity that enrich Indian Consciousness. It would be worthy of the heroism which Christ commends when He bids us to detach ourselves even from our most cherished possessions if they be found to impinge on the domain of righteousness. "If thy right hand," He says, "causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee."[1] It is unnecessary for me to dwell longer upon these objections, brought from various sources, against mysticism in general, and the Oriental mysticism of higher knowledge in particular. They serve to show us the responsibilities that attach to every great possession; they admonish us to hold that possession in such singleness of mind and purpose before God that it shall never be, to us, or any other, "a stone of stumbling and rock of offence."

And now, with increased happiness, because of the privilege of establishing closer correspondence with your minds through these communings upon the general aspects of that which to every one of us is so dear, namely, the belief that we can know God directly and abide in Him and He in us, I present before you some aspects of the Mystical Element in the Christian Religion. I do so from the point of view that Christianity is an Eastern religion and the Bible a Sacred Book of the East. The other day I was conversing at Oxford with a Sinhalese friend of mine who said: "I read the Bible with ever fresh appreciation that it is a truly

[1] Matt. 5:30.

Oriental book. In it breathe the calm, the depth, the simplicity of the East. Orientals can surely understand the Bible, for it is a book that has issued out of their own life." I was much struck with this remark of my friend, especially because since visiting the East four years ago, and coming, in sweet affection, near to the mode of thinking and feeling that governs Eastern minds and hearts, I have read my Bible with new intelligence and fresh delight. I place it now in its natural atmosphere. Its birth-place is near the palm trees and the wells. To me it is now and evermore an Oriental book. Furthermore, as I consider how this Eastern book and its Faith have dominated the life of the West and fertilised its highest ideals, I marvel yet more at the sublimity of the Oriental Consciousness, and the manner in which this Bible, the God-inspired fruit and outcome of the Oriental Consciousness, has given evidence, by its power over and assimilation with the West, of the essential unity of the human race.

To trace the history of Christian mysticism, even in its elementary outlines, would be a work far exceeding in volume the time at my disposal. I could show, if there were time, that the mystical element obtains perpetually in Christian thought. Its objectors arise, utter their protests or their admonitions, and pass away. The Mystical Element in the Christian Religion, "a tide too full for sound or foam," rolls onward in majestic stillness. The banks amid which the river rolls change their aspect from time to time. Now they are high and rugged with the severities of asceticism; now dim and silent as with embowering forests, where Ori-

ental contemplation finds its way to the feet of Christ; now broad, open and sunny, where mysticism identifies itself with the service of humanity, and after the pattern of Christ, the Divine Mystic, goes about doing good. But the river is the same; its voluminous current, knowing no ebb or shallow for two thousand years, is the outflow of the strong desire of innumerable souls, of all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues, "to get to the centre of life, which is God Himself," manifested in the Eternal Christ.

It may be said, with truth, that Christian mysticism has found expression in two spheres of consciousness, objective and subjective. In the objective sphere of consciousness the Mystical Element in the Christian Religion has felt God present in His world, has come to Him in His works; has touched, if one may say so, the hem of His garment, in an intense perception of the universe as an outward expression of the infinite vitality of God. Those of you who know the poetry of Wordsworth will recall in his works examples of feeling, penetrated with the sense of immediate communion with Deity, awakening by holy hours of silence amidst mountains and lakes, and under the spell of the evening star. I know no more passionate, perhaps no more lofty, expression of Christian mysticism on the objective side than the utterance of Charles Kingsley:

> The Great Mysticism is the belief which is becoming every day stronger with me, that all symmetrical natural objects are types of some spiritual truth or existence. When I walk the fields I am oppressed now and then with an innate feeling, that everything I see has a meaning, if I could but understand it. And this feeling

of being surrounded with truths which I cannot grasp amounts to indescribable awe sometimes. Everything seems to be full of God's reflex, if we could but see it. Oh! how I have prayed to have the mystery unfolded, at least hereafter! To see, if but for a moment, the whole harmony of the great system! To hear once the music which the whole universe makes as it performs His bidding! Oh! that heaven! The thought of the first glance of creation from thence, when we know even as we are known! And He, the glorious, the beautiful, the incarnate Ideal shall be justified in all His doings, and in all and through all and over all! Have you not felt that your real soul was imperceptible to your mental vision except at a few hallowed moments? that in every-day life the mind, looking at itself, sees only the brute intellect, grinding and working; not the Divine particle, which is life and immortality and on which the Spirit of God most probably works, as being most cognate to Deity?[1]

This is true Christian mysticism on the objective side. It is also singularly allied to some states of the Oriental Consciousness, especially where he discriminates between the soul and the mind. Had some of his expressions concerning personality behind nature been given by an Oriental, one might connect them with the cult of animism that sees in rock and tree and bird and flower the haunt of spirits and deities, amidst whom the traveller moves warily. So Kingsley cries: "When I walk the fields, I am oppressed now and then with an innate feeling, that everything I see has a meaning, if I could but understand it. Everything seems to be full of God's reflex, if we could but see it." The outward resemblance of these states of consciousness exists; that of the animistic believer, that of the Christian

[1] *Cf.* his *Letters and Memories* of his life (ed. Kegan Paul, Trench and Co., London, 1884), p. 28.

nature-mystic. Yet profound is their difference. The Christian walks through Nature with awe but without uncertainty. He dreads not the haunting presence of strange and incalculable spirits, against whose enmity or craft he must protect himself. The Spirit Whose presence he feels about him is his Friend, "Whose Nature and Whose Name is Love." With Kingsley he cries: "It is He, the glorious, the beautiful, the Incarnate Ideal, Who shall be justified in all His doings, and in all and through all and over all." With St. Paul he looks untroubled on the mystery of Nature and of life, saying: "I know Him Whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him."[1]

This objective sense of God is but the vestibule of the Mystical Element in the Christian Religion. The temple is within. Unseen of men is the secret place of the Most High, the shadow of the Almighty, in which the Christian mystic attains the homing of the soul. In the true mysticism of Christian experience the sense of God's presence and of contact with Him in the visible world has its fulfilment and verification in the sanctuary of the inner consciousness, in the sublimity and the peace of esoteric and immediate knowledge of God. If we remain only in the outer, the objective sense of the Divine, whether realised in Nature or in religious symbols, if we pass not within the veil of silence, to attain hidden communion, our life being hid with Christ in God, we do not yet know the greater and the more vital things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

[1] II Tim. 1:12.

The outward world has its own ministry for our religious consciousness. That ministry may be great in its suggestiveness. Outward institutions, ceremonies, ministers of religion are to be esteemed highly for their venerable associations and for their educational values; but these are partial, and immeasurably the lesser part of the Christian religion. In the hour when they are made ultimate, they become vain. The world for us, as for you, is but a symbol, a fleeting although wondrous spectacle; a dream that vanishes. Reality is within, in the depth of the Eternal Wisdom. Whispered in the ear of every one who essays to satisfy his soul with the outward (whether that outward be the doctrine and ritual of a church or the music and colour of Nature) should be those prophetic words of Coleridge in the "Ode to Dejection":

> It were a vain endeavour
> Though I should gaze for ever
> On that green light that lingers in the West;
> I may not hope from outward forms to win
> The passion and the life, whose fountains are within!

Let us now enter within this temple of experience where one finds, in truth, the Mystical Element in the Christian Religion. How calm is this temple of inner experience! How free from punctilios of ceremonialism, controversial clamour of dogmatism, the pride of life! With Jacob the patriarch, we say, as we leave the mad rush of the world and meet the first impression of this inward serenity: "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of Heaven."[1] Over this portal

[1] Gen. 28:17.

might be written: "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus."[1] My brethren, I am asking you to enter no alien structure of the Western imagination, with which perchance you have nothing in common, and beneath whose roof that only may be found which is unintelligible to the Oriental Consciousness. This is a faith and an experience which reached maturity, when Northern Europe was a wilderness, and America a continent unknown. The channels through which came the sources of this faith and of this experience lead Eastward not Westward. God alone knows how far Eastward the original sources of this faith may be traced as we follow them through their Semitic antecedents. Into Assyria, into Persia, into Babylonia they surely run. The question is, Do these springs blend in one common original with those from which came the Vedas and all that followed from the Vedas and determined the religious development of India and the Farther East? I have in my possession, through the kindness of an Indian friend, a book written many years ago by an Indian, dealing with this very subject: the many points of contact between the Semitic elements out of which Christianity arose and the Vedic elements out of which evolved the essential features of Indian life. He made an argument of strength to show the influence of Biblical upon Aryan thought. If location is to determine relative rights of ownership, then that of which I speak to-night belongs to you more nearly and more naturally, than to me; and the fact that I enter into it,

[1] Phil. 4:7.

and assimilate it, and find this sacred religion of the East, the religion of Christ, the very life of my life, proves only that the world is one family in all its greatest inheritances.

I foresee that in the remainder of this lecture time shall be found to go but a little way into this temple of inner experience. Nevertheless I shall not hasten: for every step reveals new beauties, and our study of the Mystical Element in the Christian Religion shall extend over the next two lectures in which we consider the Witness of God in the Soul and the Witness of the Soul to God.

Next to the ethical misrepresentation of the Christian religion by the perverse and contradictory lives of its nominal adherents, I know of nothing more likely to repel Orientals from the sympathetic study of this Eastern faith than the overshadowing prominence of ecclesiastical institutions. That these institutions are inseparable from the Occidental practise of Christianity, history appears to show. That they have their excellent uses, in their own sphere, it would be but questionable wisdom to deny. But that they may be left out of consideration without impairing the vital essence of the religion itself is the impressive fact with which we are at this moment concerned; and, I may add, it is the fact which makes its appeal to us when we enter the temple of inner experience where we are now treading. The fundamental claim of all the mystics of all the ages is that the seat of authority in religious knowledge lies within the soul itself, not in some external court or tribunal. It is more than interesting—it is wonderful

—that with this persistent claim of mysticism the profoundest philosophical movement of the modern world is in agreement. "It has been settled for all time that the criterion of truth is to be found in the nature of consciousness itself—not somewhere else."[1]

Although it be that many mystics, led far afield by seductive glimmerings of false lights, have fallen into confusion and a snare, yet is the sanctuary of ultimate truth within, in the depth where God and the soul meet in knowledge. The words of Browning must have occurred to you as I have been speaking:

> Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise
> From outward things, whate'er you may believe.
> There is an inmost centre in us all
> Where truth abides in fulness: and around,
> Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,
> This perfect, clear conception—which is truth.
> A baffling and perverting carnal mesh
> Binds it and makes all error: and to *know*
> Rather consists in opening out a way
> Whence the imprisoned splendour may escape,
> Than in effecting entry for a light
> Supposed to be without.[2]

To this conception, familiar and dear to Oriental Consciousness, the Christian religion lends itself in ways so vital and so extensive that this may be called the true starting-point from which to investigate the mystical element in this Faith. The words of Christ: "The Kingdom of God is within you,"[3] announce to us a fact

[1] *Cf.* RUFUS M. JONES, M.A., LITT.D., *Social Law in the Spiritual World* (The John C. Winston Co., Philadelphia, n. d.).

[2] *Paracelsus*, Book I.

[3] Luke 17:21.

which is not more harmonious with our own intuitive value-judgment on the meaning and worth of self-conscious life than it is characteristic of the glorious system of religious thinking which bears His Name, and for the investigation and interpretation of which I am enthusiastically endeavouring to enlist the elements of the Oriental Consciousness, represented in yourselves. I ask you now to look, with me, into the basis on which, in true Christian mysticism, rests this idea that the seat of authority in religious matters is within the soul itself. To use the words of another: "The soul itself possesses a ground of certitude in spiritual matters, and *sees* what is essential to its life with the same directness that the mathematician sees his axioms."[1] I take up this subject with the greatest delight, because it permits me to show you that the higher Christian philosophy is not incompatible with those presuppositions concerning the universe that are absolutely fundamental in Indian thinking, and, in my belief, will so remain for ever. Indian minds of the greatest penetration and nobility have been repelled from Christianity because of its supposedly impossible philosophy. I venture to say that many have been so repelled, from the intellectual standpoint, while admiring the ethical beauty of Christ and of Christian ideals. They were repelled because they had encountered only what I may call the popular philosophy of untutored minds, which has strongly marked dualistic features. They beheld God represented as an anthropomorphic God, resembling a deified man, "a magnified image of man reflected back upon space by

[1] JONES, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

the mirror of self-consciousness."[1] I wonder not that Ludwig Feuerbach, the German atheist,[2] attacked that conception of the Divine; comparing it to the illusion observed by pilgrims to the Brocken in Switzerland, who often see during an autumn sunrise shadows of their own figures enormously dilated, confronting them from a great distance, bowing as they bow, kneeling as they kneel, mocking them in all their gestures, and finally disappearing as the sun rises higher in the sky. In like manner this popular philosophy has represented the phenomental world as absolutely and independently real; real, so to say, in its own right, apart from cognition; as real as the soul, as real as God. Such methods of dealing with fundamental questions could not fail to repel the intellectual elements of Eastern society, however much those same elements might be attracted ethically. It is therefore important as well as agreeable to remind my learned hearers that such conceptions are not representative of the higher philosophy of the Eastern religion which bears the name of Christ. Probably they misrepresent the higher Christian thinking of our time as egregiously as do some of the fantastic tales that float by hearsay through the Western world misrepresent the high conclusions of philosophical Hinduism. If I do not fail, in my ignorance, to represent correctly the essence of those high conclusions, it is this: the search for Brahma is the highest task of the soul, in order to emancipation from Maya. Maya is, so far

[1] *Cf.* R. H. HUTTON, *Theological Essays* (ed. London, 1888), p. 25.

[2] *Cf. The Essence of Christianity*, trans. by MARIAN EVANS (ed. London, 1854), reviewed by HUTTON, *op. cit.*, under title *The Atheistic Explanation of Religion.*

as one may define mystery, the multitude of illusory things clinging around the supreme and only reality through the multiplying power of Brahma: Maya is not an independent principle. Emancipation is knowledge, the knowledge of Brahma: it is not a new beginning "but only the perception of that which has existed from eternity but has hitherto been concealed from us."[1] Emancipation is soul-union with God realised as eternally existing. I hope that I do not materially distort any of these conceptions. It is necessary for me to refer to the fact that the aspiration for emancipation from finite life is not a conception entertained in the earliest Indian thought. To the splendid poets of the Rig Veda, as to the Prophets and Apostles of the Bible, life, finite life, was glorious and good; a thing to be desired. "They were filled with the warm desire for life and wish for themselves and their posterity a life of a hundred years."[2] But I take the present dominant Indian philosophy and compare it thus with the higher Christian philosophy to show that, while there are differences in point of view and in conclusions, the systems, as such, are not incompatible, and the Christian system offers no serious difficulty to the most purely trained Indian mind.

Thus does the higher Christian thinking lay a basis in reason for the claim of mysticism that the soul *has* this right of immediacy toward God, to abide in God and God in it, and that the criterion of truth is found in the nature of consciousness and not in some exterior tri-

[1] *Cf.* DEUSSEN, *op. cit.*, pp. 344, 345, and PROFESSOR SATTHIANADHAN, *Lectures on Indian Philosophical Systems as Related to Christianity.*

[2] Rig Veda, 7:89, quoted by DEUSSEN, *op. cit.*, p. 340.

bunal. It looks out into the phenomenal world and sees the infinite throng of objects and persons. At first they seem a bewildering crowd of unrelated entities, each isolated from the other. At length it appears that beneath this multiplicity of elements there must exist a common ground of Being whereby they are able to enter into relations with one another, and in some manner, according to their several kinds and degrees, as animate or inanimate, rational or non-rational, into relation with that common ground of Being with which their own existence is joined. So Hermann Lotze in his *Metaphysic* says: "There cannot be a multiplicity of independent things, but all elements, if reciprocal action is to be possible between them, must be regarded as parts of a single real Being. The pluralism with which our view of the world began has to give place to a Monism."[1] I may also quote Professor Upton of Manchester College, in his Hibbert Lectures for 1893, who says:

> Every finite atom or finite soul still remains, as regards a part of its nature, in indivisible union with its self-subsistent Ground and Source. This common relation to the Self-subsistent One affords the true explanation of the metaphysical unity of the cosmos. Thus the most recent science and philosophy appear to assert at once a real pluralism or individualism in the world of infinite beings, but at the same time a deeper Monism. The Eternal, Who differentiates His Own Self-subsistent energy into the infinite variety of finite existence is still immanent and living in every one of these dependent modes of being, and it is because all finite beings are only partially individual, and still remain in a vital union with their Common Ground (which is God), that

[1] *Cf. op. cit.*, p. 69.

beings such as man, who have attained self-consciousness, are able to enter into intellectual, moral and spiritual relations both with other rational finite minds and also with the Eternal Being with Whom their own existence is in some measure indivisibly conjoined. It follows from this fact that there is a certain self-revelation of the Eternal and Infinite One to the finite soul, and therefore an indestructible basis for religious ideas and religious beliefs as distinguished from what is called scientific knowledge.[1]

Such is the basis, in our higher Christian thinking, upon which we rest the joyful affirmation of true mysticism that each soul has both the right and the power "to get to the centre of life, which is God Himself." Such is the strong foundation, laid in the depths of our being, laid in the nature of things, on which rises the structure of Christian mysticism, a house not made with hands, the true temple of God on earth.

In bringing you to this point, at which I must prepare to close this lecture (leaving the expansion of our beautiful subject for the lectures on "The Witness of God in the Soul" and "The Witness of the Soul to God"), I feel that I am bringing you to the centre of the Christian religion as verified through experience. Here is where the Christian lives; his life being hid with Christ in God. He does not live here as an anarchist, repudiating the organised life of the Christian Church, refusing to acknowledge what can be accomplished through religious institutions, an ordained ministry, the Bible, and the Sacraments. On the contrary he understands the functions of these things to be for better ordering of the aggregate religious consciousness, for

[1] *Cf.* C. B. Upton, B.A., B.Sc., *The Bases of Religious Belief* (ed. London, 1894), pp. 12–16.

education of individuals and communities in the things of the Spirit, for the fostering of all social and public aspects of the Christian religion, and for the better information of the world at large that this religion exists in vigour, and is daily extending its benign sphere of influence. And so he goes out often from the silent temple of mysticism and takes his place as a unit in the institutional life of Christianity and submits to rules and ordinances not as a matter of compulsion but as a matter of liberty—because he feels that thereby he may both receive and give a larger good. The common worship of Christians ministers to life and aids the general cause of light and love in ways that are beyond the scope of private meditation, though in no sense more sacred. Nor does the Christian dwell in the secret life of mysticism as a recluse, shut up to himself and within himself for his soul's salvation. On the contrary he takes the greatest interest in the world, in the ways of man, especially in the lives of men, their joys, their sorrows, their evil and their good, their condition and their destiny. You will instantly discover why this large, liberal interest in others is consonant with Christian mysticism when you recall what I have pointed out regarding the philosophical basis of Christian mysticism. It rests on the truth that finite beings are not entirely independent, wholly unrelated entities, but only partially individual because remaining by necessity in vital union with the Common Ground of all life, which is the self-subsistent Life of the Eternal One. Through this union with the Common Ground (unrealised and unknown though it may be by all save the enlightened few) comes the power

to any of us, Oriental or Occidental, to enter into intellectual, moral, and spiritual relations with other rational finite beings, as well as into relations with God. They who attain this mystical (and at the same time scientific) view of humanity see God in others just as they see Him in themselves. They believe in that great doctrine of mysticism which the Quakers of England and America announce as their profoundest discovery "that every human life partakes of God."[1] So, by the logic of reason, as well as by the logic of love, Christian mysticism works outward into respect and honour and solicitude for men as men, beings knit together with ourselves through vital currents that meet in the Common Ground of life in Whom "we live and move and have our being." It works outward into service, swept onward by the Divine within itself, in effort to liberate the imprisoned, unrecognised Divinity in others. It works outward into self-fulfilment through sacrifice, receiving from God, as partakers of the Divine Nature, the spirit of sacrifice, which is the Spirit of Christ Jesus.

Behind all these outgoings, whether into voluntary submission to religious institutions or into voluntary service of human individuals, is that secret walk with God, that meat to eat which the world knoweth not of. It is there the Christian lives, emancipated through knowledge of the self-subsistent Life with which his own is indivisibly conjoined. It is not a *dual* life, the soul and God living side by side within the human personality: finite *plus* Infinite. It is oneness of being; it is monism which continues no more a philosophical

[1] *Cf.* JONES, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

speculation but becomes a blessed experience. Innumerable Christian mystics have said: "I have *experienced* God." The finite and the Infinite are known in the same consciousness. It is not that a foreign Divine substance is now added to an undivine human life. It is neither human nor divine. "It is," to use the words of one who has spoken out of this knowledge, "the actual inner self formed by the union of a Divine and human element in a single, undivided life."[1]

In an Eastern land, upon the verge of that desert across which for four thousand years have passed the camel trains that bore the treasures of India toward the Syrian coast, a group of Orientals lingered pensively about a table whence all food had been removed save bread and wine. The night advanced, yet spellbound they hung upon the words of One Who, worn with sorrow, yet radiant with love, opened His heart before them, declaring the secrets of the soul's consciousness of God. He had come from the Father to be the manifestation of the Eternal, under the form of time. He had revealed Him through deed and word, through the voice of conduct and the silent witness of character. He was now on the threshold of a revelation yet more profound —the revelation through death, the death of the Cross. Majestic sweetness sat upon His brow. Power emanated from His being. Peace, like an atmosphere, surrounded Him. And this witness he bore of Himself as the Revealer of God; of God as the mystical Life of the soul:

> He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father: I came forth from the Father and am come into the world. I am in the Father and

[1] *Cf.*, on this paragraph, JONES, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

the Father in Me. Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. Peace I leave with you, My Peace I give unto you.[1]

Through Him Who spake these words on the same night in which He was betrayed; at Whose Infancy sages of the East bowed in worship; the meaning of Whose Cross sages of the East first taught the West, may I be enabled to lead you a little way amidst the inner experience of the enlightened Christian Consciousness!

[1] *Cf.* Gospel of John, *passim.*

LECTURE THREE

THE WITNESS OF GOD IN THE SOUL

In my last lecture I attempted to set before you the basis in reason of the Mystical Element in the Christian Religion. I am, this evening, to speak of "The Witness of God in the Soul." The nature and import of that witness become reasonable to us, and authoritative for us, only as we obtain a rational view of the basis on which it rests. I beg leave, therefore, to speak further on that subject. A deep impression of diversity and number is made upon the mind when it begins to reflect upon the enormous multiplicity of human lives: to think, for example, of the people in one of your great cities, of the population of India, of the population of the world. The first effect of such reflections is to benumb the mind. We cannot, in thought, follow to its conclusions the problem of a world made up of such thronging clouds and avalanches of separate and distinct beings, each one going its own way through time and space, all circling around and around one another with the meaningless, buzzing energy of an infinite swarm of flies. The places of those that fall are taken by as many more that seem to rise from the ground or descend from the upper air. The buzzing of the swarm goes through years, generations, centuries, millenniums. It is too bewildering, too grotesque, too awful! As we look more intently at this multiplicity of human lives, and at the continuous reinforcement of generations, we are

led to correct our first impression that these myriads of humanity are like a swarm of flies. We perceive that that impression misrepresents the truth. For in all these innumerable beings, we find common rational powers, varying in scope and measure, the same in kind. We find self-consciousness, memory, judgment, intention, desire, will. We find, in a word, the common equipment of thought. By reason of their possession of this common equipment the movement of these numberless beings is not the aimless circling around one another of a swarm of flies. It is the action and reaction, in all spheres of consciousness, lower or higher, of thinking lives, in relation with one another for rational ends. Instantly on perceiving this, our impression of human existence is reversed. No longer are we benumbed by the buzzing of the swarm; we are stimulated by the mystery of a thinking world! It is the most wonderful phenomenon of Nature. To the eye of discernment, each separate object in nature, each isolated fact appears worthy of our attention and rewards our study. The ancient Biblical Book of Job reminds us of the suggestiveness of detached facts and processes in nature:

> Stand still and consider the wondrous works of God:
> Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds?
> Hast thou spread out the sky as a molten looking-glass?
> Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?
> Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth?
> Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?
> Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks?
> Or wings and feathers unto the ostrich?
> Hast thou given the horse strength?

Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom?
Doth the eagle mount up at thy command?[1]

Your own Vedic hymns abound in similar suggestions; so do the earliest hymns of Egypt and Persia. Intelligent study of facts in the physical world opens to the mind vistas of strength and beauty, teaches reverence, saves from morbid self-concentration, quickens the pulse with wholesome joy of existence. But nothing that our researches disclose to us among the detached phenomena of the bodily and the visible rises to the level of grandeur on which stands the fact of a *thinking* world, a world of innumerable persons who are not isolated atoms but related existences, related through the possession of common powers of consciousness. Consider how humanity is bound together through the interaction of the powers of consciousness. All the rudimentary conditions of life depend on this interaction of a common principle of rationality. The procedures of the commercial world, both in local demand and supply, and in all the larger movements of finance and industrial development, are possible only because men can meet intelligibly through the action of thought. All domestic relationships that rise above the level of physical impulse and attain the dignity of self-determining affections, choices, and companionships are what they are because heart answers to heart, mind to mind, and the interchanges of reason and will. This interaction of the powers of consciousness ignores race distinctions and goes on wherever life meets life. Behold how we are met together at this moment in intellectual fellow-

[1] Job, chaps. 37, 38, 39.

ship. Our ancestries lie on opposite sides of the world; our minds mingle and flow together in one channel of rational consciousness. Consider also that more subtle correspondence of minds out of which grow national ideals, movements of liberty, of art, of letters; that perpetual, and, as it would appear, semi-involuntary integration of intellectual forces which transcends individual intercourse and is called civilisation. Mr. John Addington Symonds, speaking of the Revival of Learning in Europe, says:

> Some of the chief productions of humanity seem to require the co-operation of whole peoples, working sympathetically to a common end. The most splendid triumphs of modern architecture in the French and English Gothic were achieved by the half unconscious striving of the national genius through several centuries. The names of the builders of the cathedrals are unknown; the cathedrals themselves bear less the stamp of individual thought than of popular instinct; their fame belongs to the race that made them, to the spirit of the times that gave them birth.[1]

Stimulated by this splendid mystery of a thinking world, and perceiving that we ourselves are a part of it, and that a solution of the mystery would be a solution of the major problem of our own existence, the higher Christian thinking ever has pressed for a rational answer. Through the patient thought of centuries, guided, as I believe, amidst many eddies of variant opinion by the self-revealing Spirit of God, that answer, like a river moving toward the sea and broadening as it moves, has gained the power and depth of certitude. It has become evident to the Christian Consciousness

[1] *The Renaissance in Italy*, volume on "Revival of Learning" (2d ed., London, 1882).

that the multitude of individual lives cannot be regarded as absolutely separate existences, each one a self-subsisting whole, detached from all other finite existences and in the same manner detached from God. Such a theory of the world offers no adequate explanation of those relations, intellectual, moral, spiritual, that unite society and produce civilisation; and such a theory of God, as distinct, transcendent, objective, is contradictory to the fact of man's religious consciousness, which we are constantly finding out to be a more universal, more homogeneous fact than once was imagined. Christian thought moves in the direction of a conclusion which, if thought be described as a river, may without exaggeration be called an ocean of majestic finality. Lotze's words (which I quoted in my last lecture) give us our first glimpse of that broad ocean of Being: "There cannot be a multiplicity of independent things, but all elements, if reciprocal action is to be possible, must be regarded as parts of a single real Being. The pluralism with which our view of the world began has to give place to a Monism." As our joyous and worshipping gaze looks out upon this ocean of Ultimate Being, what message does it give back to us touching this wonderful phenomenon of nature—*a thinking world?* What has it to tell us of this common life of thought into which all rational beings enter as into an atmosphere which they breathe in common, as the single unitary element of all their individual personalities, this life of self-consciousness, memory, judgment, intention, desire, will? What has it to tell us of these relationships which we form with one another, of the paths of intellectual and spirit-

ual communion in which Oriental and Occidental may walk together, the deeps of consciousness in one calling unto the deeps of consciousness in the other? It tells us this: That beneath all finite life, as the ocean is beneath all ships that sail upon it, as the air is beneath all birds that fly through it, is one Infinite Ground of Being, the *substance*, the life that *stands under* all finite life, in Whom, and of Whom, and by Whom, and unto Whom are all things. But here my metaphors of the ocean and the air break down. The ocean supports yet produces not the ships that sail on it; the air carries yet generates not the birds that fly through it. But this Infinite Ground of Being, which is beneath all life, is the Source of all life; this Great World-Master projects our finite spirits out of Himself.[1] Every life that is, comes out from Him and exists in Him: "In Him we live and move and have our being," said the Christian Apostle.[2] Another of the early Christian documents thus puts it: "He hath given us all things that pertain to life that (we) might be partakers of the Divine Nature."[3] In every one of these lives His being exists, and because of this common element in themselves men can communicate intelligibly with one another and with God.

The Eternal One Who differentiates His Own Self-subsisting energy into the infinite variety of finite existences is still immanent and living in every one of these dependent modes of being, and it is because all finite beings are only partially individual, and still remain in vital (though often unconscious) union with their Common Ground (which is God), that beings such as man, who have

[1] *Cf.* UPTON, *Bases of Religious Belief*, p. 303.

[2] *Cf.* Acts 17:28.

[3] *Cf.* II Peter 1:3, 4.

attained self-consciousness, are able to enter into intellectual, moral and spiritual relations both with other rational finite minds and also with the Eternal Being, with Whom their own existence is in some measure indivisibly conjoined.

It follows that there is a certain self-revelation of the Eternal and Infinite One to the finite soul, and therefore an indestructible basis for religious ideas and religious beliefs, as distinguished from what is called scientific knowledge.[1]

If we accept this answer of the higher Christian Consciousness to the most fundamental problem of man's existence, the problem of a thinking world, we find a basis for the thought that is more particularly before us: the Witness of God in the Soul. I take comfort in reflecting that the answer which I have given is one that an Indian intellect might, without self-stultification, assimilate and adopt. In its fundamental proposition that the Eternal One differentiates His own self-subsisting energy into the infinite variety of finite existences, it is not far removed from the fundamental proposition of the highest Indian thinking, that the self-subsisting Brahma, the Absolute, by His multiplying power, projects the infinite variety of finite existences and distinctions described by the mystic word Maya. The common term by which Indian and Christian philosophy are here brought measurably together is their agreement in the rejection of a deistic view of the world: that is, a view which sets off God from the world, as an outside force, approaching men simply by external influences, and which considers the world to have intrinsic independence and separateness. It is perhaps safe to say that deism is not likely to find philosophical

[1] UPTON, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

reinstatement, either in East or West. The maturest thought of each age will more probably set it aside as inadequate.

It has been well said, and I am sure that many of my learned hearers would find themselves in agreement:

> The characteristic defect of Deism is that, on the human side, it treats all men as isolated individuals, forgetful of the immanent Divine Nature which interrelates them, and, in a measure, unifies them; and that, on the Divine side, it separates man from God, and makes the relation between them a purely external one.[1]

While there is reason to hope that the Christian basis that I have laid down is not incompatible with the primary philosophical requirement of thoughtful Indians, I wish clearly to point out that the distinctions between it and pantheism, as ordinarily conceived, are great. They are great in both directions, manward and Godward. Manward the tendency of pantheistic thought is to take the conception with which I am in accord, that God projects our finite spirits out of His own substance, and to carry it to conclusions which practically efface the intellectual and moral significance of individuality. Pantheism tends to make man identical with God. When so conceived, the intellectual significance of man's individuality is effaced. It is effaced by virtue of the fact that finite individuality has no longer any reality, as such. It is an illusory manifestation of the Infinite. The finite mind, which to me appears as the most glorious of all God's productions, remains no longer possessed of real initiative, power of discernment, capacity to move and mould the minds of others

[1] UPTON, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

by utterances of truth and light. Its movements, however sincere, devout, able, instructive, or stimulating, are phantasmal movements of a phantasmal consciousness, cancelled rather than confirmed by reality. Together with the effacement of the intellectual significance of individuality comes the effacement of true moral responsibility. It must so follow, in the nature of the case, for conduct becomes, under such conditions, not the fruit of deliberation and choice, carrying with it responsibility, but the necessary outcome of antecedent conditions, each determined by the one preceding, in an immeasurable series of predecessions hidden ultimately in the depths of the unknowable. There is practically no ethical distinction, no responsibility remaining to the individual in a consistent, thorough-going theory of pantheism. I do not for a moment assume any such effacement of moral distinctions to have taken place in any man to whom I now speak, for there is in all of us an inherent sense of right and wrong which no philosophy can utterly abolish or destroy; there is an inward witness to good against evil that abides in the constitution of our being and saves us, for nobler things, from the logical effects of theory. There is genuine comfort in reading in the *Hindustan Review* a brilliant article on the subject by a Vedantist which concludes with the words: "A practical distinction between God and man is recognised equally in Hinduism and Christianity. Our philosophers represent it as a mystery." I am sure that it is largely the recognition of this practical distinction that is developing throughout India to-day so many strong, beautiful traits of character in

individuals and so earnest an initiative in many quarters on the side of all that makes for social advancement and well-being. From the earliest dawn of Biblical thought, in the religion of the Hebrews, which was the lineal antecedent of Christianity and which had its predecessors among faiths reaching back into the depths of Asiatic life, there was full acceptance of the original projection of man out of the Substance of God, of the Absolute Being as the Source and Ground of all finite being. But the expression of that thought moved upon lines constantly growing more distinct until in the New Testament they blazed like lines of fire, protecting inviolate man's intellectual individuality, and his moral responsibility. The purpose of the Eternal Infinite in projecting these finite existences out of His own substance was, according to Christian thinking, not to surround Himself with a throng of illusory appearances, His only relation with whom must be the perpetual cancellation of illusion. It was that humanity, imaged after Himself in all the powers of consciousness, might be "a real 'other' to Himself,"[1] so that God and humanity might enter into responsive and reciprocal relations. Into that real "other" He entered, being immanent in every human life, that all humanity might not only have power of mutual interchange and of correspondence with Him, but, above this, that man might be competent, in sharing God's nature, to know the ideal righteousness, and so knowing, to exercise the functions and to assume the responsibility of a moral being. Such is the Christian's view of personality—a view with which,

[1] *Cf.* UPTON, *op. cit.*, p. 303.

judging from fine intellectual and moral qualities that I have observed in Indian life, I must conclude that many whom I now address are in full accord. I am constrained to describe it as a noble conception of personality. It gives to man his kinship in the Divine Life, yet takes from him none of the rights and immunities of individual being. It makes him a partaker of the Divine Nature, yet leaves him the actual possessor of himself. In particular it places upon his brow the high caste mark of intellectuality and sets upon his neck the garland of moral freedom. I love the Christian view of manhood because it sets the mark of reality upon the functions of the mind. What a princely endowment we have—this heritage of mentality conferred upon us through the immanence of the Divine Nature! The mind is a torch, kindled at the Eternal Flame of self-subsistent consciousness. The rays from that torch are the manifold powers of our rational self: imagination, analysis, deliberation, judgment, choice, volition, memory. How superb and shining the endowment! What incentive to education, self-discipline, reflection, dedication of thought in the service of humanity! I recall the words of Augustine concerning memory; one finds them in his *Confessions*. One might apply them to each of the God-derived powers of the mind:

> I come [he says] to the spacious fields and palaces of memory, wherein are treasured unnumbered images of things of sense and our thoughts about them. There, in the vast court of memory, are present to me heaven, earth, sea, and all that I can think upon, all that I have forgotten therein. There too I meet myself and what-

ever I have felt and done, my experiences, my beliefs, my hopes and plans for the years to come. Great is this power of memory, exceeding great, O God; who has ever fathomed its abyss? And yet this power is mine, a part of my very nature, nor can I comprehend all that I myself really am. Great is this power of memory, a wondrous thing, O my God, in all its depth and manifest immensity, and this thing is my mind, and this mind is myself.[1]

I love the Christian view of manhood still more because it sets upon the shoulders the garland of moral freedom. Do I say the garland of moral freedom? Rather should I say the yoke, if that freedom be used abnormally, if liberty be prostituted into license. Then freedom, ceasing to be freedom, becomes slavery: the will, trampling the pearls of righteousness under foot, turns again to rend its helpless keeper. But, in the normal Christian manhood, moral freedom is its garland of honour. In my fifth lecture, on the Distinctive Moral Grandeur of the Christian Religion, I shall have occasion to go more fully into this subject. At this point I advert to it in order to point out the distinction between a Christian philosophy and a pantheistic philosophy of the individual, in the matter of moral responsibility. In the latter, as I have already said, the complete identification of the individual with the Absolute bereaves him of responsibility. What he does, be it good or evil, is not good nor evil in reality, but a result of successive conditions emerging ultimately out of the multiplying power of Brahma; and, as it is the goal of the soul to attain, in knowledge of the Absolute, its emancipation from phenomenal conditions, it must,

[1] *Cf. Confessions.*

as it advances toward that emancipation, withdraw itself from moral distinctions, as from work and all other obstacles in the path of the great consummation. Nothing could be further from my thought at this moment than controversy. I am innocent of all purpose and desire to that end. Nor do I judge myself competent or worthy to analyse, save in the most elementary manner, these profound matters of faith, concerning which I could not speak at all, save with becoming reverence. It would be impossible for me to speak to Indians in an unfriendly or an ungenerous spirit, for my heart is with you in undying affection. I have a settled faith that whatever is true and essential to the fulness of truth must for ever abide under whatever name or religion it has come into being, and whatever is not essential to the truth will, in the end, when it has done its work, be permitted to withdraw and pass away.

It is not for me to determine and judge, I leave all these issues in the hands of Eternal Truth Who is also Eternal Love. My sole solicitude is to present things that seem to me to bear upon the essence of truth. If my presentation contains ought of that essence, it shall abide. If not, my words shall pass away and be as though they had not been. My present purpose is simple. As a devoted lover of the Christian religion, I seek to show wherein the Christian view, starting from its exalted premise of the projection of finite existences from the Substance of the Infinite Life and the immanence of God in man, reaches the conclusion that that projection and immanence do not efface finite personality, but rather cause it to be, by its community

of essence with God, self-realising, capable of comprehending His character and moral purpose. Also it is capable, because of its participation in the Divine Nature, of exercising the initiative of the will, taking cognizance of objects and desires, weighing motives, reaching decisions. If this be a true account of man's individuality, if he be so God-like a being that he can be an arbiter of good and evil in his own right, then you will agree with me that moral freedom *is* his garland of honour. What can be more magnificent than the two-fold conception now before us: the mind, stimulated by its self-determining capacity, consecrating its power to the highest use; the soul, garlanded with freedom and illumined with the Spirit of God, confronting moral responsibility and choosing righteousness as its portion!

That which we have now considered, touching the Christian view of personality, lays a basis in the nature of man upon which the Witness of God in the Soul becomes a conception in the highest degree reasonable and authoritative. The soul owes its existence to, and attains its self-consciousness in, God. Out of His Substance, as the Ground and Source of Being, it is projected; through His immanence it is a partaker of the Divine Nature, with power to conceive ideas of infinity, eternity, intellectual and moral perfection. Its projection from the self-subsistent Ground of Being is a projection into rational individuality, and moral liberty, in order that it may be a real "other" to God and hold reciprocal relations with Him. The mind is real, having the powers of real initiative, of continuous observance and judgment of phenomena. The will is not the automatic instrument

of determinism, an executive power that merely carries out predetermined results of successive states of character. It is self-determining; taking all the data that enter into any possible human action, those supplied by impulse and desire, those furnished by reason, judgment, memory, or motive, and, in the light of all, consummating action by decision and so taking on moral responsibility, for better or for worse. If man is such a being, so intimately allied to God yet so truly in possession of individual powers of reason and will, then the witness of God in his soul is an august probability, a complete interpretation of many facts of consciousness not otherwise to be explained.

The higher Christian thinking, in laying down a basis on which the conception of a Divine witness in the soul is made reasonable and authoritative, finds it necessary to look Godward as well as manward. It is conscious of a witness in man for which superficial facts of temperament and pious traditions will not account, a witness which is also a presence, compassing man's path and his lying down, and acquainted with all his ways. It perceives that in innumerable souls a witness is given similar in kind, working to the same moral and spiritual ends. On these evidences the higher Christian thinking arrives at the conclusion that that Infinite Ground and Source of Being, in which, as an undying principle, is the explanation of the unity of human consciousness, whereby individual minds are brought into relation with each other, must also be the Source from which this witness in the soul comes.

Furthermore, it considers the nature of man's mental

power. It finds this to be not the mere promptings of instinct, after the manner of beasts that "nourish a blind life within the brain." It is power of the highest order; of subtle quality. It is self-conscious, reflective power; able to turn inward and explore the depths of reason and feeling; able to turn outward, search, discover, compare all objects of knowledge, all processes of law. It is the power of memory, able to traverse the past and summon it into the present; the power of aspiration, able to soar upward into the ideal, to conceive abstractions of time and space, to climb illimitable heights of beauty and fathom depths of wisdom. It is the power of ethical judgment, discerning good and evil, conceiving moral perfection; capable of rejoicing in holiness, of experiencing remorse, the tragic converse of moral peace. It is self-identical power; continuous, not transitory; consecutive, not intermittent; universal, not sporadic. Beholding humanity equipped with common mental life enriched by these distinctions, and attributing its possession of this equipment to the Infinite Ground and Principle of Being, underlying all rational consciousness, the higher Christian thinking arrives at the certain conclusion that these measurable powers of rational existence which belong to man are projections of an immeasurable Consciousness, an Infinite Reason and Eternal Mind; a Divine Nature that is the Sum of all Perfections, Source of all Wisdom, Ideal of all Beauty, Seat of all Justice, Shrine of all Holiness, Heart of all Love; the Father of Lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow that is cast by turning; from Whom cometh every good and perfect gift.

I am well aware that many a noble Indian mind will follow me approvingly in these words, and will share with me the joy of attempting to delineate in terms the beauty of God. But large sections of the highest Oriental thinking are debarred from entering into the rest, satisfaction, and ultimateness with which the Christian meditates upon God's perfections, by reason of pressure brought to bear through the philosophy of negation, which is fundamental in pure pantheism. Many an Oriental, gifted by God with powers of spiritual discernment greatly superior to my own, is unable to share my joy in the contemplation of God, although qualified both to discern and to enjoy far more than I, because of metaphysical obligation binding him to seek the ultimate of thought, not in qualities, however beautiful, not in attributes, however glorious, but in the absence of qualities and attributes, in pure undifferentiated Being. I need not rehearse to Oriental ears the formulas of negation, nor dwell upon their absorbing influence upon Eastern metaphysic, idealism, character. I have already referred to this, in my first lecture, as one of the Elements of Sublimity in Oriental Consciousness, and I intend to revert to it in my last lecture as one of those qualities which may without dishonour or distortion be devoted to the service of a higher Oriental Christianity.

But at this point I wish to make evident that the higher Christian thinking is far from indifferent to the implication contained in that august conception of pure Being which for a thousand generations has haunted the Oriental Consciousness, like the travelling echo of a word spoken in an eternal past. What is the implica-

tion contained in that conception? Is it not this? As we pursue the quest for God, which, be the cause what it may, is the last insatiate instinct of the soul, we pass beyond all attributes, qualities, notes of personality. We come, like explorers who have climbed the sunny heights of the coast range, to the margin of an unfathomed, uncharted sea, whereon no keel has ever moved, whereon impenetrable mist for ever hangs, whereon we have no means nor power to launch. We gaze out upon that silent sea: we call—no sound returns but faint, far-off breathings of our own wandering voice. Is it not thus one may describe the vision, from the summit of the highest attributes, which are the coast ranges of the Absolute, the vision of the uncharted, mist-hung ocean of Pure Being? This thought of the unsearchableness of God, a thought demanded alike by reason and experience, has never been absent from a true philosophy of that religion which, coming from springs far up in the recesses of Asiatic life, flowed down into the broad river of the Faith of Christ. No soul, advanced beyond the rudiments of religious externalism into even the less esoteric regions of Christian thinking, has dared to suppose otherwise than that, if, like explorers, it were possible for us to climb to the heights of the attributes of God's personality, we should but gaze forth upon the cloud that shrouds from all eyes, that veils from all thought, the unknowable Being of the Absolute. To suppose that the whole Essence of God can be described in terms of attribute and quality, that the whole Essence of God can be conceived in man's mind, to suppose (be the word spoken with reverence!)

that it lies either in the will or power of the Infinite to reveal *all* that wherein Infinity consists even to those finite spirits most sensitive and obedient to His immanent nature, would, for an enlightened Christian, mean to be under the veil of intellectual ignorance or the curse of intellectual pride. That which the philosophy of the Indo-Aryan consciousness has called pure Being finds its equivalent in Semitic and Christian Consciousness in the inconceivability and unsearchableness of the Essence of Deity. Tho whole background of Biblical thought is an unspeakable sense of man's impotency to conceive the depths of the Godhead that lie behind those measurable revelations which come within the scope of finite consciousness. From the Old Testament comes to us that word which is like a grave rebuke to all who have dared to assume the utter knowableness of God: "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea."[1] From the New Testament come those yet more solemn voices that tell us not only of the mist-hung ocean of Unknowable Being, but of One, emerging from that mist as an Only-Begotten from a Father, bringing us as much of the higher knowledge as our spirits can contain: "No man hath seen God at any time; the Only-Begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."[2] "King of kings and Lord of lords, dwelling in light unapproachable; Whom no

[1] Job 11:7, 8, 9. [2] John 1:18.

man hath seen nor can see; to Whom be honour and power eternal!"[1] Is not an analogy to the instinctive religious sense of God's unsearchable Being beginning to dawn upon us of this modern age, in our clearer sense of the unsearchable element in ourselves? Researches of the science of psychology have contributed toward unifying all higher religious thinking in ways which, I venture to believe, shall yet be more generally appreciated and applied than at present. I do not mean to say that psychology has made, or can make, clear the mystery of the Divine Essence. I do not mean to imply that psychology has lifted, or ever may lift, the veil of mist that hangs above that silent ocean of Being stretching beyond the coast-line of its knowable qualities and attributes. I mean to say that psychology has drawn our attention to facts connected with our own life which make real to us the solemn truth that we do not know even ourselves. We see but dimly down into regions of consciousness that lie below thought or, to state it in the opposite relation, that rise above thought. To this region of man's esoteric selfhood modern science has given the name subliminal, or sub-conscious self: the self that lives in us below the threshold of our organised and related consciousness, where, in all life's common affairs, we are to ourself both subject and object, that is, both the one thinking and the one thought about. Thus, for example, it is possible for me, as subject, to think about my own thoughts as object; to analyse and ponder them; to determine whether they are good or bad thoughts that I should retain or put away. But

[1] I Tim. 6:15, 16.

below that level of organised consciousness there are the unfathomable depths of the "buried life." In that sub-conscious life we are only subject—not subject and object; do not consciously think as in our upper and ordinary life. We only know that we have that marvellous depth in our soul; subjectively we know that there we *are*, perhaps more really and ultimately than anywhere else, our true self, our *very* self. But *what* we are, and to what depths in the buried life of God our depths have access, we have no power to put into words. Sometimes, when floating on a pellucid stream, one will look far down and, for an instant, see dimly waving in some lower current, unfelt upon the surface, the long tresses of submarine grasses, the bowing plumes of ferns. So, in rare moments of spiritual insight, when the eye of introspection is purged of mote and beam, and the calm soul is pellucid and crystalline in the peace of God, we seem to see, waving and beckoning far below the soundings of reason, suggestions of an Infinite Life in which we live and move and have our being. Swiftly those suggestions vanish unanalysed, untraced, uncomprehended, and, looking down again, we see only the darkness of undifferentiated life. Is there no analogy here to help us to lift up our eyes and look upon the deep things of God? Upon the surface are evidences of all that God is, in holy character, holy purpose, holy love. And so much as we are able to grasp He graciously permits us to receive and, that we may receive more than our unaided effort could discern, He projects upon us, out of the depth in Christ, Who is, to use the noble imagery of the Gospel, as a Son emerging

from the bosom of the Father, a far profounder self-revelation. But as in our own selves, familiar as we are with all our ordinary states of consciousness, there are abysses of pure being, underlying the discriminating power of thought, extending down into the unknown, must there not be, in the Infinite Ground and Source of all existence, by Whom all things consist, depths unplumbed by any line of human wisdom, undreamed of by any finite imagination? Yet that abyss in God which has been called Pure Being, the Absolute, is no more incompatible with the rational and moral Personality of the Absolute, than is the lesser abyss of the subliminal consciousness in ourselves incompatible with our possession of reason, conscience, will, affection, and every note of personality. How then does this unfathomable yet personal God bear witness in the soul? Most naturally, and in accord with the relation of being between the soul and Himself.

Permit me now, as an exponent of the higher Christian thinking, to speak of three modes peculiar to the mystical or inner life, through which the Divine witness in the soul is realised. I attach to these modes the ancient names endeared to the Christian Consciousness by two thousand years of experience: the still, small Voice or Divine witness through Conscience; the Sure Word of Prophecy or Divine witness through Truth; the Christ of God or Divine witness through Personal Incarnation. I may remind you that in the preceding lecture, on the Mystical Element in the Christian Religion, I drew attention to the fact that Christian mysticism has found expression in the two spheres of

consciousness, objective and subjective. In the objective sphere it has felt God present in His world, found Him in His works, touched the hem of His garment through perceiving the universe to be an outward expression of God's infinite vitality. This objective sense of God is but the vestibule of the mystical element. The temple is within. Unseen by mortal is the sacred place of the Most High, the shadow of the Almighty, in which the Christian mystic attains the homing of the soul. There are moments in the life of every soul when the outward suggestions of God in nature convey no sufficing message to the innermost spirit. They seem inadequate. Their objectivity seems resounding emptiness. God seems not to be in them. It is because the subliminal depths within the soul demand more intimate communion with their Source and Ground. In one of the Old Testament historical books[1] it is related that the prophet Elijah, overwhelmed with responsibility and solicitude, fainted inwardly beneath his burden and flung himself upon the ground in despair. In vain were given him assurances of God's presence in the world about him: they seemed but emptiness; one voice alone could recall the absent courage and redeem the vanquished faith: the Witness of God in the Soul. Let me read to you this glorious record of the supremacy of our inner life.

Elijah came unto a cave and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and He said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken Thy

[1] *Cf.* I Kings, chap. 19.

covenant, thrown down Thine altars, slain Thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I, only am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And He said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still, small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave.

That face, hidden in the mantle, is the symbol of man's involuntary reverence for the authority of the still, small Voice. When he hears it, he knows whence it comes. He covers his face and listens. "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." The witness of the still, small Voice is universal. Beneath every philosophy and form of religion; beneath tradition and race; mediated through every language into the one vernacular of the soul, it makes itself heard, uttering the eternal distinction of right and wrong, declaring the potential claim of righteousness, conveying the potential sense of sin. It is the voice of a God Who cannot be silenced; Who has not left Himself without a witness in any soul that He has made; unto Whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from Whom no secrets are hid. We speak of conscience sometimes in terms which appear to imply that it is but a faculty of the soul, as sight or hearing are faculties of the body. When we consider the diseases of conscience, which may be as acute and as loathsome as diseases of the flesh; when we remember the health of conscience, which is an estate as full of joy, buoyancy,

and strength as physical health, we perceive that conscience is a sensitive and powerful faculty that works in realms where physical faculties are incapable of working. The diseases of conscience are more terrible than leprosy. It may become deaf to the Divine witness; blind to the distinctions of right and wrong; corrupt and abominable in its perverted relation to desire; deceitful and cruel in its sanctionings of conduct; paralysed through deliberate misuse; seared as with a hot iron. Health of conscience is more beautiful than bodily perfection. It is the virility of the soul: alert, well balanced, clear eyed, rejoicing not in iniquity but rejoicing in the truth; sane in judgment, ruling desire with the hand of right reason; courageous in goodness; happy in the felicity of correspondence with the eternal right. Yet conscience is without significance unless considered in relation to God; even as the eye is without significance unless considered in relation to light; the ear in relation to sound. Conscience, as a faculty, is the ear of the soul, by means of which the still, small Voice may be heard. Conscience, as a fundamental element of rational being, is, as an English poet has declared, "God's most intimate Presence in the soul,"[1] His personal voice speaking to the inner ear of our self-consciousness. In this consists the peculiar sacredness of conscience, and the special wrong of its intentional misuse. It is a faculty lying in awful proximity to those subliminal depths within us, of which we can give little account, yet in which we are confident the ultimate clue to our individuality is found and the ultimate participation

[1] *Cf.* WORDSWORTH, *The Excursion*, Bk. IV.

of our nature in the Divine Nature occurs. Many times, in the experience of those whose senses are trained by use to discern good and evil, the still, small Voice sounds in the soul's ear in tones of mystery. Intimations of duty assert themselves, so subtle that we cannot put them into words, while of their Divine authority we have no doubt; warnings against courses of conduct that to our prejudiced minds seem expedient, yet upon which the unformulated verdict of conscience sets its prohibition. There is but one adequate explanation of these phenomena. They are the Witness of God in the Soul. We become most aware of their authority when we set ourselves to violate their instructions. We become aware of the objectivity of nature when we oppose ourselves to it in volitions that ignore its reality. We attempt to press our way through the wall of rock; it flings us back, bruised and bleeding. We essay to walk on the sea as on a floor of porphyry; it parts and engulfs us. We proudly try to scale the topmost pinnacle of Kinchinjanga; the heart collapses in syncope, under atmospheric conditions that were not made for man. So when the will attempts to ignore or to oppose the still, small Voice speaking through a healthy conscience, commanding a certain act of right, forbidding a certain act of wrong, it discovers that behind that Voice, so gentle and still, there is an ideal righteousness asserting itself in majesty, against which we may beat ourselves into insensibility, but over which we cannot prevail. Right will not become wrong at our solicitation, nor will light change itself to darkness, for a cloak to our sin. In the higher Christian thinking, the still, small Voice

fulfils a ministry infinitely more broad than is included in His elemental and universal office, through conscience, of incitement to right conduct and admonition against evil doing. Under the beautiful titles, Holy Spirit and Comforter, are intimated possible ministrations of companionship, suggestion, counsel, education, guidance, illumination, empowerment, support, comfort, all of which are modes, verified in the experience of two thousand years, in which the witness of God is fulfilled in souls that lend themselves trustfully to His influence. Through the sub-conscious depths of our being, where our life and the Infinite Life become one, His influence finds entrance to all the avenues of consciousness. His very Spirit, life-making, reasonable, holy, witnesses with our spirits that we are the children of God. From this source come our holy desires, appreciation of goodness, recurrent advances in spiritual knowledge, vigorous control of unruly instincts and passions, moral courage, calmness in suffering, self-restraint in sorrow. These, in their several relations to character, produce growth, symmetry, strength, sweetness of individuality. Nor is there any term of limit beyond which this beneficent action of God within the soul must be discontinued. Because of our belief in the origin of the soul, as projected from the Infinite Source and Ground of Being, we believe in its immortality and in the immortality of the ministrations of the Holy Spirit. To those who respond to the inward witness of sonship by walking as sons of God, there opens a vista of eternal progress: an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved

in heaven for (them) who are kept by the power of God."[1]

I must now proceed to speak of a second mode through which the Divine witness in the soul is realised: the Sure Word of Prophecy or Divine witness through Truth. God speaks to the inward life of man through truth outwardly declared. From the earliest ages He has made special approaches to individuals, causing the tide of knowledge to flow through their sub-conscious life with such power that they, looking down as into the depths of a stream, saw truth and the relations of truth, not visible in the ordinary states of consciousness. This is revelation through the power of the Spirit of Truth. They who have received it have given utterance to the truth and to its relations, as they saw it in the depths of the sub-conscious life. Many others, without doubt, have claimed to have received revelations, and have uttered them as such. The credential, whereby the authenticity of revelation is distinguished from the claim of error, is not outward and formal, but mystical and inward, the verification of truth in the souls to whom it is proclaimed. It is the Sure Word of Prophecy, the self-verifying of truth, vindicating itself in the soul as the witness of God, by producing in the soul the effect of God. An early Christian writer thus speaks: "We have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts. For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy

[1] *Cf.* I Peter 1:4, 5.

Spirit."[1] It is inspiring to reflect upon truth; what it is and what it does. When the soul of a true man understands what the nature of truth is in itself, he bows down before it in reverence, he loves it with a mighty love. For truth is beautiful, noble, gloriously fashioned, in whatsoever realm it be found. I wonder not that artists have represented truth under the similitude of the most beautiful objects to be found in nature, or that the noblest thought of the ages has exerted its highest powers worthily to describe it, or that the universities have chosen the word itself (a calm and stately word!) for their motto, lifting it up before the eyes of scholars that it might print its message on their minds. It may be a long time before one comes to an apprehension of what truth is, in its own right; before one separates and sets off from the self-sufficient thing itself the various lesser ideas that custom or the craft of man have offered as its equivalents. One may suppose that *age* is an equivalent of truth, that that which has outlived generations and gathered unto itself the reverend aspects of antiquity must, of necessity, be true. Age is venerable, and he is to be pitied who under any circumstances speaks lightly of it. Yet age, great continuity in time, may or may not coincide with truth. It contains no inherent guarantee of truth. Truth may indeed be ancient as the everlasting hills, but its final criterion and evidence must be sought in a depth where time counts for little. One may suppose that *usage* is an equivalent of truth; that wide acceptance of ideas thereby assures their validity. Usage is a sacred thing: I

[1] *Cf.* II Peter 1:19–21.

honour whatever thought or belief has received the suffrage of great numbers of my fellow-men. I cannot turn in disrespect from anything, the use of which is holy to another. But usage can be no certain equivalent of truth. Truth must in the end bring usage, but usage need not in the end bring truth. I reverence usage, yet not in it do I find the final guarantee of truth. One may suppose that *declarative authority* is an equivalent of truth; that the assertions of men clothed with power, or the declarations of books issued by authority, can establish truth. But one has only to reflect on the contradictory nature of such utterances to feel the need of some method of verifying truth, less provisional and precarious than declaratory authority. A happy day, bright with the prospect of peace, dawns in his life who learns to hold in abeyance the witnesses of antiquity, usage, and authority, as ideas separable from truth; to demand not, nor rely upon as final, supplementary and external evidences, but to turn to truth itself, as it stands before us in perfect beauty, simplicity, sincerity, and ask it that it shall verify itself! Truth is very simple. It is merely the thing that is, as distinguished from the thing that is supposed to be, and is not. That simplicity gives truth its beauty, authority, power. How can truth verify itself? By showing that it is the thing it is supposed to be. For generations it was held as truth that the earth is a plane not a sphere. Antiquity, usage, authority were all on that side. At length truth came to its own merely by showing that the earth is a sphere not a plane. How can we know that anything spoken in a Scripture is truth? By the Witness of

God in the Soul that what is spoken is the thing that is. For example: a Scripture says, "The Word of God is living, and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart."[1] In Christian experience this is found to be the truth. When God is suffered to bear His witness in the soul, through a conscience that is morally in health, He reveals us to ourselves. He lays bare our motives to the inner eye; cuts, as with a surgeon's knife, through all subterfuge and pretence; convicts us of sin; humbles us and makes us ashamed of sin; brings forth in us the desire for a new life. This is the simple truth, verified by the deepest facts in the realm of life to which this truth refers. Antiquity, usage, or authority might declare against this, but the Witness of God in the Soul confirms the sure word of prophecy. Again, a Scripture says concerning prayer: "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."[2] How do I know that this is true? Not from antiquity usage, nor authority; although from each of these sources comes a powerful corroboration. But I know it for truth by the witness of God in my soul confirming the sure word of prophecy. Confused with doubt, beset by temptation, oppressed with grief, "weary of earth and laden with my sin," I approach in perfect confidence of spirit the Divine Ground and Source of my existence.

[1] Heb. 4:12. [2] Phil. 4:6, 7.

As a troubled child confiding in a trusted Father, I pour my personal confidences into the ear of that Invisible Being with Whom I am mysteriously connected; and from the depths of my sub-conscious life wells up into consciousness a calmness of spirit, a restored equilibrium, a deliverance from oppression, a peace of God of which one may only affirm: "it passeth understanding."

I have now spoken of two of the modes through which the Divine witness in the soul may be realised: the still, small Voice; the Sure Word of Prophecy. There is a third and greater mode of this mystical witness: it is called the Christ of God, or Divine witness through Personal Incarnation. In closing this lecture I shall make only a preliminary statement concerning Christ; reserving the treatment of the theme for the succeeding lecture. The preliminary statement, with which I close, has reference to two matters upon which I must permit myself to speak in a few sentences with an earnestness of conviction born of my passionate love for my subject and admiration for the Oriental Consciousness. The two matters are these: the Divinity of Christ and the need of Oriental co-operation in the larger interpretation of that Divinity to the world. It is in my judgment inadequate to consider the Christian religion in any light that excludes the Divinity of Christ. I am well aware of excellent ethical systems that have been developed in the spirit of Christianity with the Divinity of Christ excluded. I am equally aware of theological systems, advocated from the Christian side, that placed in prominence the Divinity of Christ, yet were in their spirit narrow, partisan, and prejudicial. I speak with

respect of every attempt to incorporate in modern life the principles associated with the Christian name; each contributes something that strengthens the forces of light in their conflict against darkness. Yet it remains true that he who undertakes to interpret Christianity in the sense in which it was understood by the authors of the New Testament, in the sense in which it became the delight and passion of the Eastern and Western Fathers, in the sense in which it took and held possession of the West, in the sense in which it controls to-day the most religiously effective thinking of the Christian world, both Eastern and Western, must not only take note of the Divinity of Christ, but must exalt that Divinity to the highest plane of thought; until it shall stand not for the apotheosis of humanity, not for the deification of a man, but for the projection of the Divine Word out of unfathomable depths of Godhead, into the region of human consciousness, to speak, in the life of a Man, unto the lives of all men. One of the noblest of the New Testament documents begins with language that may well sum up my present thought:

> God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son, Whom He appointed heir of all things, through Whom also He made the worlds, Who being the effulgence of His glory, and the very image of His substance, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.[1]

As I repeat in your hearing this account of the nature of Christ on its mystical side, and then, as I look into

[1] *Cf.* Heb. 1:1–3.

your faces and recall the sublime elements of the Oriental Consciousness, the Contemplative Life, the Presence of the Unseen, Aspiration toward Ultimate Being, Reverence for the Sanctions of the Past, I feel intuitively the correspondence of these thoughts with your power of assimilation and interpretation. And, in the name of the world, I come to you, sons of the Eastern sages, and ask you to take Christianity, to assimilate its essence in your own religious consciousness, and lift it, higher than ever it was lifted before, in the thoughts of men. Tremendous is the need of the world that some power, great enough in intellectual capacity, fervent and sensitive enough in feeling, confident enough of the reality of the Unseen, eager enough to find emancipation in the knowledge of God, shall be raised up in the earth to take the Christian religion with the joy of discovery, to pour into the interpretation of it the pent-up enthusiasm of waiting generations, to bring to light the imperishable freshness of its essence, to deliver it from the perilous weight of ponderous forms, to restore unto it the high spirituality of the first Christian age.

Where shall a power be found, endowed with capacity for a work at once so august and so urgent, if it be not found in the Oriental Consciousness! Europe launched her crusades Eastward to snatch the tomb of Christ from the hands of Orientals. May the day come when a Christian East shall launch her crusades Westward, not to seize a tomb, but to proclaim a resurrection, and to plant the banner of Christ's Cross on higher ground!

LECTURE FOUR

THE WITNESS OF THE SOUL TO GOD

I ended the preceding lecture by summing up results reached at that point. It appeared that after laying down, in terms of the higher Christian thinking, a rational basis on which to establish the conception of a Witness of God in the Soul, I had proceeded to state three modes, peculiar to the inner or mystical life, in which that witness is known by human consciousness: the still, small Voice, the Sure Word of Prophecy, the Christ of God. Of the first and second modes I spoke with some fulness. The still, small Voice is God's most intimate and universal witness in man, speaking, in the inner ear of conscience, commandments of righteousness; and, as the Holy Spirit or Comforter, accomplishing, for each responsive soul, ministrations of companionship, suggestion, counsel, education, guidance, illumination, empowerment, support, comfort. The Sure Word of Prophecy is the manifestation of Truth in the souls of those to whom it is communicated. It is Truth's verification of itself in rational consciousness; the demonstration to the innermost self of Truth's beauty, simplicity, sincerity. It may be corroborated or denied by antiquity, usage, authority; the manifestation of Truth in the soul is final, the correspondence of the thing spoken with the thing that is. Of the third mode of Divine witness, namely, the Christ of God, I but prepared the way to speak in this lecture. I confined

myself to two preliminary matters; which were spoken of, in closing, with an earnestness of conviction prompted by my love for the subject and my admiration for the Oriental Consciousness. These matters had reference to the Divinity of Christ and the need of Oriental co-operation in the larger interpretation of that Divinity to the world. I expressed the conviction that it is inadequate to consider the Christian religion in any light that excludes the Divinity of Christ; that if anyone shall undertake to interpret Christianity in the sense in which it was understood by the authors of the New Testament and by the Fathers of the second century and in the sense in which, to-day, it controls the most religiously effective thinking of the Christian world, he must not only take note of the Divinity of Christ, but exalt that Divinity to the highest plane of thought. I stated my belief, which is confirmed by each additional day spent in conference with Eastern minds, that the Oriental Consciousness, by virtue of its sublime elements on the mystical side, is qualified to discharge for the world a service of which it stands in need. The world needs the impulse of minds approaching the Christian religion untrammelled by the ponderous mass of Western forms; endowed with ardour and passion, with insight and intellectual capacity, with vast assurance of the unseen, with insatiable thirst for knowledge of God. The world needs, specifically, the impulse of such minds, to reaffirm as a controlling force in the Christian religion that which was its pristine glory, the mystical apprehension of the Christ of God.

The Oriental Consciousness generates such minds:

the wealth of your soul-quality produces them. You have what the world needs, what the world waits for. Can you wonder then, my friends, if I, a lover of the world, come to you and summon you, in Christ's Name! Should I apologise for speaking thus, to men of other faiths? I cannot, without the crime of insincerity. The truth that is in your several faiths cannot be shaken by your assimilation of the faith of Christ. Truth never casts out truth, it casts out only error and whatsoever else has served its purpose fully and is ready to depart. It has ever been that when God needs men He calls them, making it possible for them to follow His bidding without dishonour to any truth. Christ called Jews to be Christian Apostles. They obeyed and carried with them in Christianity, for its enriching, all that was true and eternal in Judaism, leaving behind only that which had served its end and fulfilled its course. Twenty centuries have passed. Many world conditions have changed. New conditions bring new needs. To-day the greatest religious need of the world is for a Christianity deepened and spiritualised through the recovery of elements germane to the Oriental Consciousness, and best interpreted thereby. This world is God's world, and whatsoever great need arises in the world implies God's summons to those who have the means to meet that need. Famine in India summons the wealth of America. Perilous overgrowth of the external in religion summons whatsoever race consciousness is most rich in powers of spiritual discernment, most eager for the unseen treasures. To this conviction my soul is committed. I have come across the world to

express it. It is a conviction born of God, expressed on His behalf. The depth of my conviction I may best convey to you in the words of an American poet:

All my emprises have been filled with Thee,
My speculations, plans, begun and carried on in thoughts of Thee,
Sailing the deep or journeying the land for Thee,
Intentions, purports, aspirations mine, leaving results with Thee;
O, I am sure they really come from Thee,
The urge, the ardour, the unconquerable will,
The potent, felt, interior command, stronger than words,
A message from the Heavens whispering to me even in sleep;
These sped me on.[1]

In order that your minds may be prepared for what I have to say concerning Christ, I must ask you to enter upon some consideration of the special subject of this lecture, namely: "the Witness of the Soul to God." For those who accept in any form a monistic philosophy there is little difficulty in believing that the soul of man gives, out of itself, consciously or sub-consciously, witness to God. God makes Himself felt and heard in the soul by His immanent presence. He is the Ground and Source of finite existence as the sun is the ground and source of light. When (if I may use the common terms of speech) the sun rises, our atmosphere is filled with light, and every object lying in the open atmosphere is bathed in light. That there should be a witness of God in the soul appears to be necessary, in the nature of things. He is the active principle of life in us, and we feel His activity both in our bodies, through all the phenomena of vitality, and in our souls,

[1] WHITMAN, "Prayer of Columbus."

through modes appropriate to spiritual consciousness. It appears to be no less necessary, in the nature of things, that the soul shall give witness to God. For the soul lives in God even as God lives in the soul; its life in God is the most elemental and essential fact connected with its existence. As our bodily organs give appropriate witness to the elements with which they are severally related, the lungs expanding with the inrush of air, the heart pulsating with the inrush of blood, the pupil of the eye contracting with the inrush of light, so the soul gives witness in many forms of consciousness, and in sensations too profound for conscious organisation, to that Infinite with which its life is inseparably conjoined. Those many forms and sensations of soul-action can all be grouped under one word: perhaps the noblest word in the whole vocabulary of the finite individual: religion. Professor William James of Harvard University, in the Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion before the University of Edinburgh, has given a broad and helpful, though essentially incomplete, definition of religion: "Religion shall mean for us the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine."[1] In this form of soul-action we must include under the term religion, interpreting that term broadly and incompletely, not only the witness of consciousness to the concrete deities of polytheism, or to the transcendent deity of Islam, or to the immanent personal presence of Christian

[1] *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (ed. Longmans, London, 1902), p. 31.

monism, or to the impersonal absolute of Higher Hinduism, but also the atheistic idealism of the Higher Buddhism and all unformulated conceptions of the spiritual structure of the universe, which bear witness on the negative side to idealistic tendency. Whatever reverential feeling is coupled with the sense of infinity, be it that which seems abstractedly godlike or that which is adored as deity, partakes of the nature of religion.[1] I do not regard the definition just quoted as a complete definition of religion inasmuch as it contains no explicit reference to ethical consciousness of the Infinite, and this, as I hope to show later in my lecture, is not only the crowning element in the most fully developed forms of religion, but must be found to exist in principle, even though imperfect in quality and perhaps distorted in mode of expression, in any system of thinking, before we can with entire justice describe that system as a religion. Out of this soul-action in relation to God, realised inwardly by individuals, have grown all systems of belief and of churchmanship. With the outward forms of these systems we are not at present concerned. For the moment let us dwell on the importance and value of the inward facts involved. An adequate sense of the significance of religion as a mark of man's nobility is often lost beneath inadequate explanations offered as final by those who have investigated this phenomenon from a naturalistic point of view. I use the term in no disparaging sense. I need not go over the ground, which must be familiar to many of you, especially as I had the privilege to traverse it somewhat

[1] *Cf.* JAMES, *op. cit.*, pp. 31–34.

in my former series of Barrows Lectures in India, by means of a lecture on "The Nature of Religion." Some have traced the origin of the religious instinct to fear in the presence of alarming powers of nature; others to ancestor worship and progressive deification of the dead; others to animistic instinct born of dreams and dread of the unknown, stimulating the imagination to depict surrounding objects as inhabited by spirits; others, as von Hartmann, to pessimism caused by the misery of the world. In the evolution of the human species these influences have operated to deepen religious feeling; but, as I consider the beneficent and glorifying effects upon men of that religion with which I am most familiar, and upon which I may therefore with least impropriety set an estimate, I venture to be sure that no such source by itself could have produced that religion. It has transformed the character of many persons, so that they may be described as born anew, has controlled disordered communities and furnished them with fresh ideals. It has permeated arts and developed literatures. It has interpreted and applied the love of God. These things I say from knowledge, as a Christian. I hope that those experienced in other faiths can present similar testimony. Christ, in an aphorism almost proverbial, said: "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."[1] I cannot believe that such a religion as the Christian religion, with its good fruit, can spring from any source such as these that I have named. Whatever truth

[1] Matt. 7:16, 18.

there is in man's religious experience springs from that which is noblest in himself; his oneness of nature with the Infinite Ground and Source of Being. The thorns and thistles of religion spring from other roots.

Upon such a theory of the final source of religion, its message to us, as the deepest fact of experience, should be a grand message. It should enable us to understand and appreciate ourselves. To have some conception of what we are on our finer side is an incentive to noble living. To think meanly of ourselves as worms of the dust is an incentive either to hyprocrisy or to despair. The attempt to promote such self-depreciation as a frame of mind appropriate to religion was one of the futile efforts of deistic thinking, now, happily, becoming obsolete. God was represented as a King, dwelling sumptuously in His palace of power; man, a beggar crouching at the gate. Religion was understood to signify abasement, self-loathing, consuming sense of belittlement. In proportion as the dualistic abyss between God and man could be conceived in terms of width and depth, religious feeling was satisfied. It was the logical conclusion of such thoughts to invest God with the garment of wrath, the lurid light of anger on His countenance, the purpose of destruction in His heart; to portray man as the debased and helpless object of that anger, seeking by gifts and sacrifices to elude an unhappy fate. I shall show you that, in the higher Christian thinking, there is not only a place for humiliation and self-loathing, but that the practise of penitence is engendered by man's highest estimate of his own value. Pharisaic self-righteousness is an evil

fruit of deism; the worm lifting up its head in preposterous vanity. Christian humiliation, the sacrifice of a contrite spirit, is born of the sense of greatness used unworthily. The message of the religious instinct to our own personal consciousness is, then, the grandest of messages. It draws attention to the irrepressible nature of ethical desire. The flesh cannot satisfy: the gratification of physical impulse has no adequacy in itself to content the soul. Injured and outraged, as one foully dealt with, the soul recoils with a cry of indignation from the moment of indulgence and bends with more severe intention toward the goal of righteousness. Ethical desire is the only immortal form of desire known to the soul. To objects of sense that attracted us in youth we may grow cold; of intellectual striving that once appealed to ambition we may grow weary; even the face of nature that once seemed beautiful may be changed for us by grief, but the goodness of good remains, a thing to be wished for eternally. Do we ask, why this invincible persistence of ethical desire? There is one sufficient answer: In ourselves we share the nature of the Utterly Good. To this I shall refer more fully later.

The message of the religious instinct to our personal consciousness draws attention also to the inadequacy of material conditions as a ground of contentment. Each age, as it comes, developes an element of thought in opposition to a spiritual view of the universe. This element takes up its ground on the materialistic side and undertakes to account for the phenomena of being within the bounds of matter. I feel the great debt of

religion to materialistic and naturalistic thought. It supplies an indispensable quality in balanced reasoning. It administers sharp and salutary rebuke to mysticism of the apathetic type that tends to part with ethical distinctions in self-abandonment to infatuated subjectivity. Materialists, impatient of the subjective, scorning its alleged criteria, knowing no substance but matter, crowding all thought-action against the stone wall of the physical test, render to the religious consciousness, over-inclined to dreams, the rude kindness of the physician who strikes a patient to save him from relapse into stupor. But, as our knowledge of personality advances, pure materialism, as an explanation of life, is found to represent so small a part of the world's profound conviction and to account for so small a proportion of life's profound experience, that, when it declares itself able to account for all, it must be regarded as an eccentricity, if not as an obsession. For we have seen, and nowhere is the sight more witnessed than in India, those whom poverty or voluntary renunciation of goods leaves in a material estate of privation, yet over whom the spirit of discontent has no power. Rich in possessions of the soul, indifferent to material fortune, they count all things but loss for the excellency of higher knowledge vouchsafed in the realm of the spirit. With such, poverty is wealth. Disburdened of material accretions, they are at leisure to enjoy and use the opulence of the soul. Also we have seen surfeit of possessions with hungerings of the soul: a being to whom wealth is multiplied, with scarcity of peace as by an ironical decree of fate; a sated body mocking

the starvation of spirit; hands grasping more than they can hold; heart fainting for the Bread of God. The Witness of the Soul to God has no more pathetic demonstration than in those whose importunate prayer for peace goes up amidst scenes of splendour that are the envy of common minds. Once more: the message of the religious instinct to our personal consciousness draws attention to our intuitive sense of participation in the Divine purpose as well as in the Divine life. Mr. Allanson Picton, in his essay on "The Essential Nature of Religion," defined religion in well-chosen words as "being in its essential nature an endeavour after a practical expression of man's conscious relation to the Infinite."[1] Why this endeavour after practical expression of the conscious relation to God? Why is man not content with knowledge of the relation and its scientific analysis? Why must he go beyond this and demand practical participation in the purpose of that life of which he is a part, entering, as a Biblical Psalmist has nobly put it, into "the secret of the Lord"? The answer is found in the necessary unity of consciousness. If in my most intimate friendships I discover my psychic unity with those I love, it is necessary for me to give practical expression to that sense of unity by entering into their purposes, sharing their feelings, and, so far as possible, merging my life in theirs. Much more must the unifying impulse possess me when I realise a relationship that is not objective but subjective: an Infinite Life in me, which is also my life, even as Christ said of His disciples, "I in them and they in Me."

[1] *Cf. The Mystery of Matter* (ed. Macmillan, London, 1873), p. 216.

It is not enough that I shall know the fact of unity with the Infinite, of which my religious instinct informs me. Knowing it, nevermore can I be as if I knew it not. Henceforth that knowledge is in me, "the master light of all my seeing." And the zeal of the soul must be to enter into practical co-operation with that Eternal Will of Goodness to which it is inseparably conjoined. So Picton says:

> Religion is not the intellectual formulation of that consciousness (of relation to the Infinite), for this is properly the work of philosophy. But religion aims rather at expression in the language of the heart. And if I use the epithet "practical," it is not because I would confine the idea of religion to deeds of devotion or acts of worship, though these are necessarily included; but because the term seems best to embrace both such manifestations of religion, and also that inward energy which in contemplation yearns after the supreme good.[1]

Such is the importance and value of religion in itself. By means of it we come into our greatest inheritances: the irrepressible fervour of ethical desire, the demand for satisfaction in regions transcending material conditions, the sense of right to participate in the Divine purpose as well as in the Divine life. In the light of results obtained by this analysis of the message of the religious instinct to our personal consciousness, the various modes in which the soul bears witness to God take on absorbing interest. Not the least interesting thoughts in this connection are furnished by atheism and the various forms of denial of the Divine. Atheism is an occasional attitude assumed by human minds toward the proposition of an Infinite. The atheist

[1] *Cf.* PICTON, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

has to deal with the same range of phenomena appearing in the human consciousness; these messages of the religious instinct speak to him as they speak to the believer. He knows the irrepressible nature of the ethical sense, for many, professing atheism, have lived the life of morality. He knows the impulse of the soul to spread its wings and soar above material conditions. His problem is to account for these things while eliminating the Infinite. This he must do by forcibly curtailing the range of his own being; by cutting the wings of his soul. "He must learn to reduce," as Hutton says in his essay on "The Moral Significance of Atheism," "the influence of the higher intellectual and moral faculties, as compared with that of the senses, social impulses, and those energies which tell most directly upon the world."[1] And this he must do "by eradicating from the imagination that haunting image of the Divine character which most stimulates these faculties into action." The soul bears no more tragic witness to God than in its ruthless dealings with itself in the effort to extirpate consciousness of the Divine. As the corpse transfixed in the rigour of death bears witness, by unmoving eyeball and unrelaxing hand, to life expelled in the last crisis of mortality; so the atheist, by the enforced suppression of higher instincts and the violent excision of sacred tendencies, bears to God the terrible witness of negation.

The phenomena of doubt, in all stages of questioning, incertitude, anguish, or agnosticism, are part, scarcely a less tragic part, of the soul's witness to God.

[1] *Cf. Theological Essays* (ed. Macmillan, London, 1888), p. 9.

Too often a narrow identification of religion with assured belief has led to misinterpretation of the meaning of doubt, and to condemnation of those who experience it. Man himself, by the audacious definiteness of his assertions concerning God, has created doubt in the soul of his brother man. The attempt to establish by authority, for the many, that which can only be discerned by the solitary soul in its inner consciousness and according to its own modes of apprehension, has introduced confusion for some and promoted discouragement and indifferentism for others. There is also an interpretation of doubt nobler than this. In a striking narrative of the Bible, Saul of Tarsus, afterward known as Paul, is proceeding upon an errand of extreme hostility to Christ and those in sympathy with Him. Breathing out threatenings and slaughter from a soul animated by hatred and contempt toward Christ, suddenly he is overwhelmed at noon-day by a light brighter than the sun, beneath which he falls to the earth. He hears a voice that he recognises as the voice of Christ calling him to account for his action and demanding withdrawal of opposition and obedience of service. He rises to obey, but all is dark. He knows not whither to turn. He stretches out his hands for guidance. His own statement is this: "I could not see for the glory of that light."[1] The words may be taken as a figure of the noble form of doubt. There are moments in which those who most resolutely have opposed the Christ of God suddenly are overwhelmed by an apprehension of His glory. They fall before Him, neither affirming

[1] Acts 22:11.

nor denying. Doubt in its tremendous form lays hold of them, not because there is so little of God but because there is so much of God forced in upon their sight. They cannot see for the glory of that light. Such doubt is the soul's witness *to* God, not against Him. There is a hand stretched out for such, to lead them into knowledge.

If atheism and doubt, although on the negative side, give evidence of the soul's witness to God, the positive witness is yet more impressive. To one of its most ancient forms I have repeatedly made allusion in these lectures: the Aspiration toward Ultimate Being, which may be called the conditioning fact in the Oriental religious consciousness, the influence of which operates in every Eastern religion. The significance of this as a Witness of the Soul to God extends beyond the possibility of overstatement. It is the very diadem of the spirit set upon the calm, contemplative brow of the East. It is the most regal claim to a Divine birthright ever made by humanity. It is proffered not in noisy and shallow words, but in the silent and unalterable assumption of the soul. It may be described not as an article of faith but as a state of consciousness. It is not an attribute of the East; it is the East itself—its very spiritual substance! When I spoke earlier in this lecture of my summons to the East on behalf of the world to become the interpreter of Christ, I had no thought of calling the East away from this great birthright to undertake that interpretation, but of bidding it, through and because of this birthright, to accept and discharge that duty. For by reason of that Aspira-

tion toward Ultimate Being, that assurance that the reality in you is one with the Infinite Reality, that refusal to accept the transitory world as final and the perishable forms of matter as ultimate, you are qualified above all your human brethren to assimilate in your own consciousness and to reaffirm in the world that mystery which was hid from ages and generations, but is now made manifest to such as are of an enlightened spirit, the mystery of the Christ of God—that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. The witness of the Eastern soul to God is so profound, organic, involuntary, that it appears, like a commandment written upon the heart, to designate the East and set it apart for a service of the world commensurate in value and depth.

As man's religious instinct has found expression in channels that, originating in the East, have merged in Christianity, his soul has borne witness to God, in ways that have had the effect not of contradicting but of supplementing that silent and unalterable aspiration of the Farther East toward Ultimate Being. To that aspiration I have paid heartfelt tribute. May I call attention to the importance of discriminating between contradictory and supplementary expressions of religious instinct? The history of religion gives many instances of contradictory expressions of religious instinct. Probably every religion furnishes such instances within itself in the evolution of its own institutions and practises. Contradictory expressions of of this kind certainly are to be found in Christianity, ancient and modern, to the great bewilderment of non-

Christian observers, who probably do not realise that a closer study of their own religions might disclose similar contradictions. We have, for example, in the company of Christian believers those who advocate confession of sin to priests, appointed to receive such confidences and to pronounce absolution. We have, on the other hand, those who consider such proceedings quite invalid, and recommend that confession of sin be made directly and only to God. We have those who consider that religion should be in the care of the State, which should regulate its observances, conserve its doctrines, and secure its endowments. We have, on the other hand, those who affirm that the State, as such, should have no authority in the matter of religion, save to secure equal rights and privileges for all religious bodies; and that choice of observances, framing of doctrines, and modes of temporal maintenance should be in the hands of the people, without let or hindrance. We have those who declare that Baptism, the solemn rite which is a sign of entrance within the Christian Church, may be administered duly to persons of adult age alone, and only by the act of immersing the whole body in water. We have, on the other hand, those who consider that infant children of believing parents are entitled to recognition within the fold of the Church, and that the sacred rite of Baptism may be administered duly by sprinkling upon the head a few drops of pure water. I take much interest in calling attention to these contradictory expressions of religious instinct found in the practise of the Christian religion. Such contradictions excite the curiosity and awaken the dis-

trust of thoughtful observers from without. The true Christian attitude toward these difficulties is an acknowledgment of their existence and a careful estimate of their relative significance, as compared with the larger unities of the same religion. It will then appear that these contradictory expressions on certain points of faith or practise have come to exist among bodies which are in agreement upon fundamental questions. I have no doubt that in Hinduism and other religions of India, corresponding instances of contradiction appear, and would be acknowledged with equal frankness.

Contradictory expressions of religious instinct are found to exist on a large scale between the several great religions of the world, and occasionally to involve questions of high magnitude. The suffering heart of humanity has been torn by them. I need not give illustrations of this point. The field of the world has been ploughed as with ploughshares of fire by religious passions voicing in opposite ways the same grand endeavour of man to give practical expression to his conscious relation to the Infinite. As I study the history of religion on this troubled earth of ours, I grow toward the conviction that the contradictory expressions of religious instinct are not the ultimate and vital things that should attract our attention. Many do not involve questions of the first magnitude; and some, in the Christian religion certainly, have received more attention than they merited and have been the cause of more sadness and heart-burning than the issues they involved were worthy to produce. Where the contradiction between religions stands on ground of primary importance, the deadlock

offers no avenue of escape for the religious consciousness of man into broader and more blessed union with his brethren in the one great fellowship of the Truth. The old battles rage on and on. The old fields of conflict are ploughed backward and forward with ploughshares of fire. Where is the gain to the world? I repeat: As we study the religious problem of the world, the contradictory expressions of religious instinct are not the ultimate and vital things that should attract our attention. The things that we should study are the *supplementary* expressions of religious instinct, for in them lies promise for the world and victory for Truth. I said, a moment since, and I draw your attention now to the expression, for my heart is bound up in its meaning: As man's religious instinct has found expression in channels that, originating in the East, have merged in Christianity, his soul has borne witness to God in ways that have had the effect, not of contradicting, but of supplementing the aspiration of the Farther East toward Ultimate Being. That aspiration, whether or not it be the most ancient form in which the soul has borne witness to God, is the fundamental form and the form that has given expression to the soul-longing of the greatest number of human lives. In principle it says: Man, so far as he is real, is identical with God. Be it then the goal of life to break through bonds of ignorance and be emancipated in knowledge of the one reality. Let us count all things but loss; yes, all things but dreams, for the excellency of that knowledge. In principle that is pantheism. It involves primarily subjugation of the visible for the sake

of the invisible, contempt of the seen for the sake of the unseen. I do not hesitate to tell you that many thinkers of the West, appalled by ominous signs in Western civilisation, that betoken the worship of applied force, money force, brain force, force of physical elements in combination, have felt that in pantheism lies the only hope of postponing the world's practical alienation from the life of God. It has seemed to them that religion is losing its power, except in form; that pantheism alone can bring back inner consciousness of unseen interests. So thought Spinoza, and said it with a grace never excelled in either hemisphere. So thought von Hartmann, and said it thirty years ago, in unequivocal words:

> It becomes a question of vital importance to Religiousness and to the ideals of humanity, how Pantheism is to be brought into the consciousness of the nations who represent modern civilisation; for, if Pantheism does not penetrate there or arrives late, the inevitable consequence will be that irreligious materialistic Naturalism must occupy the empty place.[1]

I cannot agree with such a solution of this pressing world-problem, the growing indifference to the unseen in the interest of the seen; the problem which is at the bottom of every political and social condition in the world to-day. I cannot feel that the importation of Eastern pantheism in its present state would save the day, in seats of empire that control the world. Experiments made in this direction confirm my opinion. Pantheism, applied as a correction of materialistic

[1] *Cf. The Religion of the Future* (transl. by ERNEST DARE; ed. London, W. Stewart and Co., 1886), p. 110.

world-power, in men or nations, acts, up to a certain point, in the desired direction. At that point it becomes inoperative, spiritless, apathetic, not because its conception of finite being as identical with Universal Being is not Truth, for it is Truth's foundation stone, but because that conception requires to be supplemented by further conceptions successively disclosed to the religious sense of man, particularly along the lines of his ethical consciousness. These disclosures of which I speak have occurred in the course of that stream of thought and empirical knowledge which, gathering volume from many tributaries, Aryan, Semitic, Greek, like a mountain torrent taking up into its bounding current streams from a thousand hills, becomes at length the shining river of Christianity. I rejoice to remind you that I am now to speak of matters which do not contradict, but richly supplement, the noblest and most ancient philosophical conceptions of the East. Professor Deussen, in his *Philosophy of the Upanishads*, uses words that, by repetition, I gladly make my own. After pointing out that the Veda and the Bible agree in recognising man's need of release from the depraved self of experience and the complete transformation of the natural man as a whole, he says:

> Why then do we need a release from this existence? Because it is the realm of sin, is the reply of the Bible. The Veda answers, Because it is the realm of ignorance. The former sees depravity in the volitional, the latter in the intellectual side of human nature. The Bible demands a change of the will, the Veda a change of the understanding. On which side does the truth lie? If man were pure will or pure intelligence, we should have to decide for one or the other alternative. But since he is a being who both wills

and knows, the great change upon which the Bible and the Veda alike make salvation depend must be realised in both departments of his life. Such a change is, in the first place, according to the Biblical view, the softening of a heart hardened by natural self-love, and the inclining of it to deeds of righteousness, affection and self-denial. It is, however, in the second place and side by side with this, the breaking forth upon us of the light of the great intellectual truth which the Upanishads taught before Kant, that there is in truth one Being alone, eternal, exalted above space and time, multiplicity and change, self-revealing in all the forms of nature, and by me who myself also am one and undivided, discovered and realised within as my very Self.[1]

Then Deussen concludes with words that express far more clearly and strongly than mine what this entire course of lectures is designed to express:

The New Testament and the Upanishads, these two noblest products of the religious consciousness of mankind, are found when we sound their deeper meaning to be nowhere in irreconcilable contradiction, but in a manner the most attractive serve to elucidate and complete one another.

I may, then, without fear of being thought to take up a hostile attitude to the fundamental philosophy of the East, proceed to show how Christianity in its highest realm of thinking goes on to supplement that philosophy. The message of pantheism is distinctively a message to the intellectual consciousness of man, telling him what he is in his Being, and how he stands related to the Universal Ground of Being, the Absolute. The message of Christianity is distinctively a message to the moral consciousness of man, telling him what he must do, what he must become in character, because

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 48, 49.

of his relation to Absolute Being, which is pointed out by pantheism. If I may adopt for momentary illustration the well-known titles of Kant's two critiques, the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the *Critique of Practical Reason*, I should say pantheism deals with the facts and sanctions of man's Pure Reason; Christianity deals with the facts and sanctions of man's Practical Reason. Approaching man's nature with a view to interpreting it to him, that he may enter into salvation from a depraved empirical self, Christianity reminds man that his moral consciousness is just as much an actual part of himself as his intellectual consciousness, and that if he acknowledges the last he must also acknowledge the first. The two are co-ordinated in himself. I do not suppose that any of my learned hearers would even wish to deny the reality of our moral consciousness. To do so would make it necessary to deny the reality of intellectual consciousness, which stands on precisely the same ground of validity; and to deny intellectual consciousness would be to deny the Absolute, for the Absolute in us is the essence of intellectual consciousness. It is the self-existent Life of the All in us that renders us capable of philosophical thought which is pantheism. To deny pantheism is to deny the All.

Christianity, taking this fact of moral consciousness, first draws our attention to its nature, then tells us its meaning. The *nature of moral consciousness* is a subject that leads us into a field of thought where we are at a loss to determine whether the objects that meet our gaze are more wonderful, more beautiful, or more terrible. We find in our consciousness a capacity of

moral distinction, the power to discern good and evil, intuitive, existing prior to all instruction. It is a capacity that may indeed be greatly modified by education, that may be developed from a rudimentary stage to a high and delicate state of ethical discernment; but the power is in us prior to its development, as an original underived fact of consciousness. It emerges into the region of organised consciousness, where we analyse and think things through to their conclusions. It is, I believe, primarily existent in the sub-conscious life, at a depth beneath analysis, as a subjective state of ethical discernment. We feel the good when we cannot account for its presence; we feel the evil, as a chill breath exhaled upon us from without. Joined with this power to discriminate good from evil, there exists also, as an underived fact in our consciousness, the intuitive sense of the absolute value of good. We know what we mean when we say "a good man." We know that we are making a declaration of relative value; and that if we could say "a perfectly good man" we should be making a declaration of absolute value, the contrast and opposite of "a perfectly bad man." This sense of the value of good is in us by nature. More than this: We are conscious of the authority of good for ourselves. By an underived power of consciousness we feel that the good embodies an unconditional demand of reason; the good has a right to command us; the good, by an authority within itself, compels us to say, "*I ought.*" In the moment when we say "*I ought*" we enter the region of moral responsibility and find ourselves to possess a variety of powers that affect our

lives and determine our conduct. We find that we have power to discern between higher and lower affections, between higher and lower motives, and that while we may, in experience, obey the lower affection or yield to the lower motive, we acknowledge in reason the supremacy of the higher, and are conscious that we have empirically rejected the claim of good. The effect upon ourselves of this rejection of the higher in favour of the lower is to bring discord into consciousness, a sense of not having done the thing that had the right to command us, a sense of falsity to our ideal. Yet even this discord in consciousness may not prevent us from repeating the act of disloyalty to good, because of the further fact of consciousness that we have a power of free choice between conflicting alternatives of conduct, a power to choose darkness rather than light, to permit the lower affection to usurp the place of the higher, the unethical passion to trample upon the ethical ideal. Such is the nature of moral consciousness; we know not whether to call it more wonderful, more beautiful, or more terrible. What is the meaning of this fact? To what source must we attribute its existence? It is not the result of any school of culture, or of any special creed. It is not the idiosyncrasy of any nation. It is universal: a birthright of humanity. In untutored races the sense of right and wrong, the power of the moral imperative, the concurrence or antagonism of the will, the discernment of an ideal are present, but in rudimentary forms. Under the influence of true progressive culture the scale and plane of ethical culture are indefinitely raised; artificial and spurious elements

are cast out; ideals grow in the lustre of purity; the will becomes amenable to reason and its choices are invested with ever higher rationality. Evidently there can be but one source of ethical consciousness; and that identical with the source of intellecual consciousness. In the Common Ground and Source of all phenomena, in that Universal Intelligence to which we trace the springs of thought and the secret of knowledge, we shall also find the fountains of ethical consciousness and the ultimate heart of God. The involuntary perception of good and evil by man, his sense of the moral imperative, his conviction of the value of good are the witness of the soul to the moral character of God in Whom it lives.

Advancing thus by a process of thought not contradictory to the results of higher Eastern philosophy, the Christian religion adds to those results supplementary truths of the richest import to the individual and the world. The relation of pantheism and Christianity as supplementary to one another in the world's advance to an adequate knowledge of God is suggested by the two members of an early Christian Scripture: "He that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."[1] It may be said that the mission of pantheism is to assert the *being* of God—to make men believe that He is: the Life of all that lives, the unifying Consciousness in all souls; and that the mission of Christianity is to assert the *moral character* of God, to make men feel that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him—to

[1] Heb. 11:6.

teach men the relation of their own moral consciousness to the moral consciousness of God, the relation of their wills to the will of God, the nature and extent of their responsibility in the presence of God. In other words, pantheism makes clear *that* God is—Christianity gives moral effect to that knowledge by making equally clear *what* God is. It does so, as the most mature and profound Christian thinking abundantly shows, not by setting up an imaginary being whom it calls God exterior to man, and arbitrarily decking that being with such attributes as fancy or ecclesiastical authority may choose. That has been done, but without satisfaction to reason; inasmuch as in such a being, arbitrarily defined by man, there is nothing in the nature of Ultimate Being. Such a God is simply a magnified man, who must himself be accounted for by causes lying back of himself. The higher Christian thinking advances toward an apprehension of God's moral consciousness by the venerable path hallowed by sages of the East, the path of introspection. It finds the Moral Character of God through the deeps of consciousness in man. As the ocean is beneath all ships, the air beneath all birds, so is the Infinite Ground of Being beneath all life, the Source of all life, the Great World-Master, projecting our finite spirits out of Himself. We are but what He is. A Christian Scripture says: "As He is, so are we in this world."[1] So man most deeply approaches the knowledge of God through the witnessings of his own consciousness. The Pure Reason in man, the power of philosophical thought, is, in us, the immanence of the

[1] I John 4:17.

Infinite Life as intellectual force, the partial movement in the finite of that Infinite Consciousness to which all hearts are open, all desires known, and from which no secrets are hid. The Practical Reason in man, the power of moral judgment, the sense of the absoluteness and authority of good, the power to discern ideals and classify motives, is, likewise, in us, the immanence of the Infinite Life as moral force, the partial movement in the finite of that Infinite Moral Consciousness which is the perfection of good, the essence of right, the seat and habitation of all the beauties of holiness. The testimonies are absolutely co-ordinate: the testimony of Pure Reason pointing to God's Being—*that* He is; the testimony of Practical Reason, pointing to God's Character—*what* He is.

I shall be told that what I am now saying is inadmissible because the expression "What God is" is, by implication, an assignment of qualities to the Infinite, and the Infinite cannot be qualified. I should like to speak to that point for a moment. There is no more interesting example of opposite intellectual tendencies than that which is furnished by the history of Western and Eastern thought respectively in the matter of assigning qualities to the Infinite. The Western mind, actuated by reverence, feels under obligation to describe God both in nature and character, on the ground that *not* to worship the qualities of God, by specifying them, is to show lack of appreciation. Urged by this good motive, the West constantly falls, or is on the verge of falling, into excess of affirmation touching the nature of the Infinite and into the fallacy of representing the

Infinite as perfectly knowable by man. The Eastern mind, actuated by the same motive of reverence, feels under obligation to deny the possibility of making any affirmation touching the Infinite. Urged by this motive the East constantly falls into the excess of making the most perilous of all affirmations, namely, the affirmation of positive negation that the Infinite is altogether unknowable. It is interesting to note the reasons leading respectively to these opposite views of the Infinite. The West, with its characteristic sense of personality, seeks to make God personal in the sense in which man is personal, in order to show that God and man are one in the bond of the Divine Love. The East, with its characteristic sense of Ultimate Being, seeks to exclude all real personality from God as well as from man, in order to show that man and God are one according to the philosophical conception of Ultimate Being. So long as pantheism and Christianity are placed in opposition, as mutually exclusive types of thought, it cannot but appear that in these two views of God we are confronted by an irreconcilable contradiction. But let us permit ourselves to recognise in pantheism a fundamental principle to which Christianity, coming in the fulness of time, contributes supplementary, enriching elements, essential to the complete development of religion. Then the two views of God which, taken separately, develope contradictory results, are found, when brought into relation, to produce one harmonious result, of the greatest richness and power. The excesses on either side drop away, and the two norms of thought perfectly supplement each other.

The pantheistic norm establishes and conserves the unsearchableness of the Divine Essence, which is a shoreless, soundless ocean of Being. The Christian norm, breaking from crude deistic notions of an external God, finds in the immanence of the Absolute within man himself, as the Ground of consciousness, moral distinctions and qualities in an ascending scale of idealistic suggestion. Of these no explanation can be given except that they are manifestations in the sphere of the finite of an Infinite Moral Consciousness, which is externally present in that ocean of Ultimate Being, in a sense transcending human power to know or to imagine. We may speak of "God's Will," "God's Mind," "God's Thought," but those terms are mere terms of necessity, which, in our finitude, we use to indicate that of which we can form no other than a figurative conception. We cannot know, we cannot imagine what will, mind, thought are in the shoreless, soundless ocean of Ultimate Being. We cannot know, we cannot imagine what character and ethical purpose are in the Infinite Moral Consciousness. So speaks the Bible: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."[1] Man knows only, by the moral imperative in his own soul, and by the ethical ideals which rise higher as he himself ascends in true culture, that these witnessings within himself of the Universal Mind are projected out of the inconceivable depths of Infinite Moral Consciousness.

[1] Isa. 55: 8, 9.

As we compare and measure these ethical ideals, from the view-point of our highest culture, eliminating those that are temporary, accidental, local, or, in any sense the fruit of ignorance, retaining those that are universal and enduring, we find one that rises above all others, gathering into itself the permanent elements of others but ascending higher. We call it love. I do not mean sentimental, erotic affection, which is a thing so different and so readily amalgamated with evil that one would gladly give it another and less exalted name in English, even as it has another name in Greek. Love, as the highest ideal of moral consciousness, is unmingled with, uncontaminated by, erotic affection.[1] It lives in an atmosphere free from egoistic passion. Its beauty is the beauty of holiness; its passion is the passion of self-renunciation; its sphere is not selective and preferential individualism, setting up one above all others; its sphere is the universal life of man. When, from the plane of highest culture, we look within ourselves, if we find this love we know it as our best. We bow to it as that having the supreme right to command us. Obedience to this love means abolition of selfishness, dethroning of pride, discarding of unethical ambitions. Obedience to this love means patience toward the weak, compassion toward the erring, sympathy for the ignorant, tenderness for the sorrowing. Obedience to this love means participation in the universal life, reverence for all men, faith in humanity.

[1] In making these observations I am not unmindful of a contrary opinion regarding the two Greek words expressed by PROFESSOR BIGG of Oxford in his Bampton Lectures on the *Christian Platonists of Alexandria*. *Cf.* Introduction, pp. 9, 10 (ed. Oxford, 1886).

What then is the message of this highest fact in our moral consciousness, this ideal that witnesses within, above all other ideals as the best we know? The Christian religion teaches us to interpret this fact. As this love is the most commanding fact among all the facts of our moral consciousness, which, in their totality, constitute the immanence of the Spirit of the Absolute in ourselves; as this love suggests and inspires the highest ethical ideals that we have power to entertain, and perpetually convinces us that it has the greatest absolute value among all things that we have power to know, we therefore conclude that it is a suggestion of the most central fact in the Moral Consciousness of Ultimate Being. I say a *suggestion*. It is that only. We, of ourselves, cannot conceive what love is in the Moral Consciousness of God, even as we, of ourselves, cannot conceive what thought is in the Intellectual Consciousness of God. Yet, guided by the witness of the soul in us, that is, guided by that within us which is projected out of the Infinite Moral Consciousness, we say, knowing well what we mean, up to the limit of our intelligence, "God is Love."

I have just said that we, of ourselves, have no power to conceive what love is in the Moral Consciousness of God. That must be true. I will agree with any pantheist as to the inconceivability of the Divine Consciousness by the human mind. "God only knows the love of God," said a great English hymn-writer. But that fact does not operate to defeat a purpose of the Infinite to enter the sphere of our moral consciousness in order to disclose His nature and His purpose out-

wardly, even as the Infinite is ever in the sphere of our consciousness, disclosing Himself inwardly in our power of reason and conscience. We may not go to Him, but He can come to us, and add to the inward aspirations and hopes of our moral consciousness an outward confirmation of those aspirations and hopes, given in the way that we can understand most easily, that is to say, in an Incarnate Life.

The line of thought which we have pursued this evening started in the fundamental ground of pantheism. It has led us into a region of thought not contradictory but supplementary to that fundamental ground. We have advanced from the Being of the Infinite to the Character of the Infinite, making our way thereto along the sacred path of introspection, looking into the depths of our own moral consciousness, reading in those depths suggestions of the Nature and Essence of God. We are brought now to a question of fact. Has God given any outward confirmation of those beliefs and hopes concerning Himself which man, through the ethical witnessings of his own soul, ventures to entertain? As we cannot know what God's Moral Essence is, save as we infer it through the moral imperative in ourselves, because of the inconceivability of the Absolute, has there at any time issued from that inconceivable Absolute, as a Son coming forth from the bosom of a Father, as a Word uttered in the language of humanity, as an Interpreter of the secrets of the Divine Intelligence, an outward revelation of that which is affirmed by our inward sense? The Christian religion is the answer to this question: the double answer of history and

experience. Its answer of history is the fact, the purpose, and the work of Christ in the past. Its answer of experience is the place and the power of Christ in the moral consciousness of the present. The consideration of this double answer will occupy my next lecture on the Distinctive Moral Grandeur of the Christian Religion. In beginning the present lecture I expressed the conviction that it is inadequate to consider the Christian religion in any light that excludes the Divinity of Christ. This conviction I repeat in closing, as I turn once more to you, my Eastern brethren, and reflect upon your power to interpret that mystical Divinity of the Living Word, as it may be given you to assimilate its meaning in your own consciousness. How strong, how clear, how sufficing, seem the probability and reasonableness of Christ's essential Divinity when we think of the requirements of our own moral consciousness and when we think of holy love as the central Essence of the Infinite. We have in ourselves, as the outcome and projection of the immanent Spirit of God, this power of ethical discernment. We know good and evil. We know the authority of good. We hear the unconditional demand of the moral imperative. We recognise the supremacy of higher affections over lower affections. We can grasp high ideals. Ah! who shall show us the highest? Who shall speak with authority to our variable consciousness, and summon it to permanent rational commitment to the best? We cannot obtain this great boon from one another, for each is like the other. There is none among the sons of men that can speak with universal authority in his own

name. Who shall give us this boon of the best, if it be not that Infinite Good of Whose nature we partake? Must there not come from that Infinite a Revealing Presence to Whom we can go confidently and Who shall say to us absolutely, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life"? But there is in our moral consciousness a bitter need, as well as a great potency. We have a will that sets at naught the soul's ideal; that scruples not to pay homage to the temptations of sense and to contest the moral imperative. Who shall deliver us from the schism and anarchy that are within us? Who shall lift us out of moral obliquity and blindness? Who shall purge our corrupt affections? Who shall rescue us from the curse of untruth in our spirit? Who shall convict us of sin? Who shall create in us a clean heart and renew a right spirit within us? Can we do this for each other? We try—as priests, as teachers, as brothers—but it is external. We cannot reach the inward source of trouble. He only can be our Helper, our Saviour, Who comes not in the power of an earthly commandment, but in the power of an endless life, out of the depths of God. If that ideal of love, which in ourselves we discern, be a suggestion of the very Essence of God, love that is patient toward the weak, compassionate toward the erring, sympathetic toward the ignorant, tender toward the sorrowful; love that enters into the Universal Life, reverences all men, has faith in humanity, if that be a suggestion of the central Essence of the inconceivable Godhead, then, though we cannot know that love in its shoreless, soundless depths, we may be sure that it

has not failed us, but *has* spoken, in a Word that we can understand.

> So, the All-Great, were the All-Loving too—
> So, through the thunder comes a human Voice
> Saying, "O heart I made, a heart beats here!
> Face, my hands fashioned, see it in Myself!
> Thou hast no power nor may'st conceive of Mine,
> But Love I gave thee, with Myself to love,
> And thou must love Me, Who have died for thee!"[1]

[1] BROWNING, "An Epistle."

LECTURE FIVE

THE DISTINCTIVE MORAL GRANDEUR OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

Great religions, like great men, have strongly marked distinctions, whereby each is set apart from others. An eminent modern student of Greek civilisation finds that the religion of Greece in the fifth century before Christ was a religion of joy. "It was a happy religion," he says, "not dealing much with supernatural terrors, but identifying feasts and their pleasures with the worship of deities. Exuberant joy, even including dissolute pleasures, was included in the religious celebrations of these people. The joys of Greek religion were many and intense, its sadness and solemnity were long kept in the background."[1] Joy, then, was the distinction of Greek religion. If one were to ask for a distinction whereby the Christian religion is set apart from others, it might be said in reply that it is a religion of character. Many other attributes attach themselves to this religion. It is also a religion of joy, although of joy conceived, related, and experienced otherwise than in Greek religion. Of the Christian, as of the Greek, it may be said, "its joys are many and intense." It is a religion of beauty. The faculty of aesthetic judgment is highly developed in the Christian religion. It is sensitive to the beautiful: the beautiful in God; in the projections

[1] *Cf.* J. P. MAHAFFY, D.D., D.C.L., *A Survey of Greek Civilisation* (ed. London, Macmillan, 1897), p. 105.

of God's Being that make the world of Nature; in man, the most wonderful of those projections; in man's relationships and attainments, domestic love, literature, art, science; in the world of ideals, justice, mercy, truth, worship. The beauty of these is appreciated in the Christian religion; "its joys, many and intense," spring largely from this source. It is also a religion of contemplation; having knowledge as its goal. Its ritual elements are least important. It is essentially a religion of the spirit; its altar is in the soul; its incense is thought; its final law, obedience to the heavenly vision; its goal of life, knowledge of the Godhead manifested in Christ. "This," said the Lord, "is Life Eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent."[1] It is, finally, a religion of action. The Infinite Godhead is the Fountain of energy, producing innumerable forms and modes of life, beneath all of which It is the Ground Substance. The Christian religion is full of energy proceeding from this Source, finding vent in action. "My Father worketh hitherto," said the Lord, "and I work."[2] Contemplation prepares for, and issues in, action. By contemplation the heavenly vision is discerned; by action it is obeyed, through the doing of God's will on earth as it is done in heaven.

Joy, beauty, contemplation, action are impressive attributes, yet of no one of them may it be said that it is the distinction of the Christian religion, setting it apart from others. Beneath these several attributes is one unifying principle which is that distinction and by

[1] John 17:3. [2] John 5:17.

virtue of which joy, beauty, contemplation, action take on new and high significance. The Christian religion is a religion of character. By this is meant that its special function is to contemplate God on the moral side of being in terms of the ethical ideal; and to interpret life in terms of righteousness and duty.

There is found in Christianity, as I have explained, much that is in other religions. With joy I have pointed out that toward some important postulates of pantheistic thought, the attitude of the Christian religion is not contradictory; it is supplementary. But I wish to make myself clearly understood as defining the sense in which the Christian religion supplements man's earlier religious experience. There is an external sense, as when we add one number to another, or set one object by the side of another. There is an internal sense, as when we introduce a principle which works as a transforming element, recombining pre-existing material of consciousness and giving thereto new meaning and value. In the latter sense Christianity supplements pantheism; not by external addition of dogmas and precepts, but by introduction of a principle involving contemplation of God and interpretation of life, that gives new meaning to each and joins both in unity, not of passive existence alone, but of active purpose. If I may use an illustration proposed by another: "The new element which Christianity has introduced into the thought of the world transforms, elevates, works a fundamental change in all the previous materials of religious knowledge. It takes up these materials into itself, but it takes them up as the plant takes up air and earth and moisture and

light, or as the living body takes up the matter which constitutes its food—not transferring them wholesale, but by its inward organic chemistry, subduing, disintegrating, reconstructing all that it receives into similitude with its own nature."[1] The purpose of my lecture is to consider this new element which Christianity has introduced into the thought of the world. I am to speak of "The Distinctive Moral Grandeur of the Christian Religion"—the religion of character. By using this expression I am far from intending to imply that the ethical element is not present in other religions. My purpose is to show that in Christianity (considered in its pure essence) the ethical is brought into such fundamental relation with the metaphysic of the religion, and is placed in such primacy of influence as the central principle around which the entire Christian Consciousness is organised, that it does in fact amount to a new element introduced into the thought of the world. We look for the ethical, and find it in all religions. Its presence is necessary because moral consciousness is a fact of human life. Wherever man is, there is the potential sense of right and wrong, welling up into his life from that Infinite Moral Consciousness out of which he springs. Both the grade and degree of ethical expression found in any religion or individual depend on the extent to which culture of the ethical sense has taken place. Where this culture is most deficient, the moral quality in religion is rudimentary and of little importance. Where culture of the ethical sense is most mature,

[1] *Cf.* Principal Caird, *The Fundamental Ideas of Christianity* (ed. Glasgow, James Maclehose & Son, 1899), Vol. I, pp. 21, 22.

the value of the moral element in religion rises to high power. If the culture of the ethical sense were complete, the moral element in religion would be supreme; religion would become the interpretation of righteousness. The distinction of the Christian religion is that it puts the ethical first; it makes it a condition as well as a result of the higher knowledge of God. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."[1] "Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."[2] "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"[3] "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."[4] In consequence of this primacy of the ethical, the Christian religion takes up into itself, invests with new meaning, adapts to new ends, the several attributes which appear as the distinctions of other religions. Joy, in a religion where the ethical is less prized than the emotional, might mean the effect of self-indulgent pleasures, or even, as was the case in old Greek religion, the egoistic excitement of dissolute pursuits. In a religion of character where the ethical takes rank above all other interests, joy means pure and exquisite elevation of the soul produced by conformity to an ideal of righteousness. It is not a lesser but a greater interpretation of joy. Joy sought through self-indulgence and at the cost of right rends the unity of consciousness and, after the force of excitement is spent, gives place to affliction, discontent, disgust. Joy produced by self-fulfilment in righteous-

[1] Prov. 9:10.
[2] Heb. 12:14.
[3] Luke 6:46.
[4] Matt. 5:8.

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ness, by obedience to a heavenly vision, by choice of light as against darkness, by unification of life in God, is a tree whose fruitage of delight is perpetual, a well whose sweet water cannot fail. In God's presence there is fulness of joy, at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore.[1] Beauty, in a religion where the sensuous is prized above the ethical, might mean devotion to the external; worship of form, deification of physical instinct. In a religion of character the soul's interest lies within the veil of the unseen, amidst correspondences of thought and purpose with eternal facts of God's moral consciousness. Ideals of beauty appear before it, possessing a charm that exterior forms may suggest but cannot supply. The heaven of righteousness opens to the soul's eye, disclosing the fascination of wisdom. The fashion of the sensuous passes; the beauty of goodness, founded in reality, remains the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. Contemplation, in a religion where the metaphysic of Being is the all-absorbing object, becomes an intellectual end in itself. By the esoteric doctrine of an incorruptible soul, distinct from mind and will, the seed of the Absolute in the finite, without thought, purpose, active sin, or holiness, there is attainment of concentration but loss of development. The witness to the Infinite in the moral consciousness is disregarded; the expansion of personality on the side of efficiency is sacrificed; the forceful play of qualities trained for life's work in the school of prayer and experience is resigned in favour of a metaphysical destiny. In a religion of character contemplation is not rejected

[1] *Cf.* Ps. 16:11.

but carried up to a higher power. Without guilty presumption it undertakes to gaze upon the wholeness of the Infinite; not, indeed, with any hope of complete discovery, but because of inward compulsion. It cannot otherwise think of God than as the Source of man's whole life, moral as well as intellectual; therefore Himself the Ideal of Character as well as the Fount of Being. Contemplation becomes not a metaphysical end, attained by isolation from moral distinctions, but an ethical means making for godlikeness. The contemplative life, discerning, through Christ's interpretation of the same, the modes of an ideal righteousness, reflects as in a mirror the glory of the Lord and, ultimately, is changed into the same image. Action, in a religion where ritual performance has become a more pressing imperative than moral attainment, always tends to externalise God; to make Him a being like ourselves standing apart from us and receiving our acts of homage. The history of religion shows that the tendency of ignorance is to adopt religions whose distinction is action, the doing of ritual deeds, the performance of a round of ceremonialism prescribed by authority. Possibly von Hartmann is right when he describes this as "a mechanical religious cultus which is the easiest and the most empty of ideas."[1] It may be this under certain circumstances; a pathetic resort of ignorance and superstition, because its complete externalism can be followed easily by such as have not learned to think. Yet it must be said also that not alone to ignorance and superstition does there appear attraction in a religion that sets

[1] *Cf. Religion of the Future*, p. 99.

ritual performance above moral attainment. There are reasons other than ignorance, that dissuade us from looking within ourselves. When the soul has not bowed in allegiance to the claim of righteousness, nor sought to bring the desires of the flesh under control of a higher law of good, a religion of action offers escape from the rebuke of conscience. We attempt to palliate wrong in the soul by busily fulfilling acts that bear the name of religion yet make light demands on our reflective powers. We attempt to propitiate God by making clean the outward way of conduct, while the inward way of thought remains uncleansed. A religion of character believes in action, but only as expressing moral purpose, inspired by vision of God. "Cast out first," says Christ, "the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."[1] Pious actions, gifts, sacrifices are, in the code of a religion of character, without value save as they are preceded and accompanied by an inward unifying of thought and purpose with the most pure and true that we know. "Thou delightest not in sacrifice, else would I give it: Thou hast no pleasure in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise."[2] When this inward unifying of thought with the ethical ideal takes place in a religion of character, the whole field of action is flooded with sacred light. There remains no fundamental distinction between holy and common action, for all actions are made holy by the pure moral purpose in which they are done. The body, as well as the mind,

[1] Matt. 7:5. [2] Ps. 51:16, 17.

becomes a temple of God. All days, places, estates of life are unified and dignified by one central purpose of good, commanding the rational soul. Life itself becomes blessed through the all-consecrating power of its ideal. As of old in Greece, over the gateway of the beautiful temple of Epidaurus, was inscribed: "He that would enter the fragrant shrine must be pure, and purity is to think holy things,"[1] so, over the temple gate of our earthly life, the religion of character sets these words: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."[2]

By these examples, in several relations of joy, beauty, contemplation, and action, I have sought to show how a religion of character, through establishing the primacy of the ethical, may be said to introduce a new element into the thought of the world and, in that sense, to supplement the earlier religious experience of man. Having reached this point, we find ourselves in the presence of a question larger and more fundamental. Wherein consists the Distinctive Moral Grandeur of the Christian Religion? If the distinction of the Christian religion is in the fact of its being a religion of character, from what source does it obtain that distinction? The importance of a distinction is judged by what lies at the back of it; the distinction of wealth by substance and extent of fortune on which it is based; the distinction of military fame by deeds and achievements on record; the distinction of scholarship by thoroughness of training and intellectual work; the distinction of moral authority by

[1] Noted by CLEMENT of Alexandria, *Strom.*, V, I, 13. See also BIGG, *Christian Platonists* (ed. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1886), p. 92.

[2] I Cor. 10:31.

the source whence it issues. It is sometimes understood by members of other religions (and I think not unnaturally) that the distinction of the Christian religion as a religion of character is supposed by its disciples to rest on their own achievements, on churchly institutions, on the civilisation of the West, on theological tradition, on ecclesiastical authority, or on general assumptions of superiority. But those of my learned hearers who have done me the honour to follow my lectures to this point have observed that my position is precisely opposite to that implied in any such assumptions of superiority. I do not disparage the religious institutions of the West when I say that the strongest and best of them could furnish but an insecure foundation for so unique and vast a structure as the Christian religion. The fair city of San Francisco tottered and fell upon the quaking ground beneath her; so had Christianity long since sunk in ruins if her foundation had been the institutions, dogmas, tradition, or prestige of a single group of nations. Not to any of these do we turn, or dream of turning in our search for the sources whence arose this religion of character. It made the ethical interest supreme by evolving it from the most mystical sources. It drew that interest forth from the most abstruse and ancient consciousness of the pre-historic world, gathering its essence more and more into the similitude of personality, until, in the fulness of time it appeared among us, my brethren, incarnate in the Man of men; and a Voice declared: "Thou shalt call His Name Jesus, for it is He that shall save His people from their sins."[1]

[1] Matt. 1:21.

Again and again, in the course of these lectures, I have called for your co-operation as Orientals, sublimely gifted with powers to discern truth lying beneath the surface of things, I have asked that you shall give me your loving fellowship of spirit, as I, with all the limitations of my Western life upon me, save that my heart beats with yours, have attempted to trace the mystery of godliness, to describe the Witness of God in the Soul and the Witness of the Soul to God. At no point have I so desired your fellowship as now, when I essay to speak of the unfolding upon earth of the religion of character. Whence came it that a faith, whose central principle is the primacy of the ethical, arose in the earth and entered into the experience of our race? St. John in his Gospel speaks of new lives of enlightenment which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.[1] We must admit, concerning the Christian religion, that it was born not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man. It was not planned in the councils of power, nor promulgated by earthly authority. He Who appeared as its Representative and Interpreter was despised and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The immediate range of His influence, during the earthly ministry, was limited. The importance of what He was communicating to the world was understood by few and by those, until their full enlightenment came, but in part. When, as the result of His ideals and teachings, He was swept to death on a wave of envy and malice, it seemed that one more child of light had disappeared in

[1] *Cf.* John 1:12, 13.

the world's dark ocean of sorrow. But that deep engulfment of His Life marked the beginning of His Glory. Death could not detain Him. It was not possible that He should be holden of it. With His rising again evidence began to accumulate, evidence still accumulating after two thousand years, and silently extending into every part of the known earth, that in His Person a new element entered into the life of the world, "transforming and working a fundamental change in all the previous materials of religious knowledge." That element is *the Religion of Character.* As I discuss to-night before you the moral authority of this religion, I do so, if I am capable of knowing my own mind, as one approaching the subject from the outside. I put aside my training within this religion, my Christian ancestry, my Christian country, my Christian tradition, as matters irrelevant to the conditions in which I find myself at this moment. The only personal feeling of which I make no attempt to divest myself is that of affectionate desire to win to the thoughtful study of this religion of character men who by their profound acquaintance with the religion of Being are prepared to assimilate whatever may supplement, enrich, and expand that primary postulate of consciousness. I have before me as data for my problem the general religious consciousness of the world and its philosophical significance. I have the specific history of Christian experience as an ethical knowledge of God realised through Christ. I have the historic fact of Jesus Christ (a fact, the authenticity of which no longer is questioned). I have the Bible, with interpretations of the significance of Christ's Nature given by

men who came most immediately under His power. Last of all I have myself, with the independent, involuntary witness of my own moral consciousness to what this religion of character tends to accomplish in my life, so far as I submit to its power. All of this is as open to you as to me. Let us share it together, as friends and companions in the search for truth. Permit me to tell you what answer I seem to receive, when I approach this new element that has come into the life of the world, this religion that interprets all things in terms of the ethical sense, and ask of it whence it has arisen. It is too great a phenomenon readily to be accounted for. The signs of external greatness which have attached themselves in the course of time are the least significant and the least important. From them I would withdraw your eyes that I may fix them on other and better things. I would not have you to suppose that, when I speak of the greatness of the Christian religion, I mean greatness in the worldly sense, splendour of buildings, sumptuous ceremonialism, far-reaching sway of authority, pomps and dignities of office. These are things that nationalise religion; that give to it the appearance of a Western cult; that disincline the mind of the East from serious thought concerning it. I am speaking of a greatness that is not of this world, that transcends all outward forms and reveals itself through modes of the Spirit.

When I approach this phenomenon, the religion of character, which has power to cause man's active religious consciousness to pass through the lens of an ethical ideal and thus to be changed from colourless

meditation upon Being into vivid forms of moral experience, I find that I am investigating a power whose sources are many and profound. For the satisfaction of my spirit I ask, Whence has it arisen, on what does it depend? It answers: He who would apprehend the Distinctive Moral Grandeur of the Christian Religion must first consider the nature of man, the nature of God, and the need of a religion of character in the world. He must then consider the life purpose of Jesus Christ; the power of Jesus Christ in the Christian Consciousness; and the Divinity of Jesus Christ as the Revelation of the Heart of God.

I do not deem it inappropriate that, at certain points, my lecture should take on the form of autobiography and become for the moment a record of personal experience. Every man, accustomed to reflection, finds the higher interests of religion to be personal; not exterior to himself but pressing themselves home to the inner life of consciousness and sub-consciousness. So long as religion signifies chiefly external fulfilment of ritual, submission to outward authority, or worship of outward objects, our knowledge of its reality is scarcely begun; we are yet babes in spiritual discernment, whose life is in the limited realm of sensory impressions, not yet having entered the broad inheritance of the Spirit. That there is a measure of satisfaction in the religion of the external is obvious, even as the babe has its own type and measure of happiness, in watching shadows dance upon the floor, or gazing on the gaily coloured toy in its hand. In each case it is the satisfaction of incompleteness. The babe is delighted with the play of sensory impres-

sions, because its powers of reflection have not yet come to self-consciousness and made their demand for recognition. The complacent worshipper of the external is content, because the development of the soul is unequal. Ignorant alike of its greater needs and powers, he becomes a man in years but remains a child in knowledge. Let the soul verily awake, arise from dreams and plays of an inchoate consciousness to mature reflection; let it take note of its own deep selfhood and consider unimaginable longings put forth by perceptions and affinities buried in its sub-conscious life. Thus, coming to itself, it demands a religion which shall not be completed in outward ritual or sacrifice, but in "the immediate feeling of a sympathetic Divine Presence." It matters not whether a man have behind him an ancestry Hindu, Mohammedan, or Christian. Traditions, however great or good, cannot take the place of experience, after our reflective powers have awakened. One by one, each in his own way, we seek God and are found of Him. I have had the purest Christian ancestry, through many generations. As a child, its mild momentum, like a soft-flowing stream, bore me unresisting in the current of Christian observances. But when I became a man, the voice of a deeper self spoke within me, refusing to be silenced by my vague efforts to submit to the conventional and to believe as others believed. When, thinking to satisfy that protesting voice, I appealed to the external as it stretched back into the past—my Christian ancestry, the Church, the word of authority, the continuity of Christian experience—my reflecting self told me that in all these there

could be no final authority for me, save in those elements that might be verified and assimilated in my own moral consciousness. When, seeking firmer ground, I appealed to the external as it lay around me in the world of contemporary thought, I found only confusion and the strife of tongues. Many, absorbed in materialistic theory, were questioning the validity of the unseen. Many, active in criticism, were demonstrating by appeals to history the need of formidable reconstructions in the philosophy and history of religion. Many, loyal to great traditional inheritances, were seeking to cover them from assaults of scholarship. Many, "lacking the real historical sense and psychological understanding in handling religious problems,"[1] were applying to the Christian Scriptures and to the religious consciousness of early Christianity a form of rationalistic test that completely antagonised faith in the Divinity of Christ. It was evident to my reflecting self that I need expect no voice from the uproar of clamouring tongues with a final message of authority; that I need look for no teacher to emerge from the throng of disputants and give, by some magical word of certainty, appeasement to my doubts and fears. I knew at last that I must go within myself, bearing thither all the gains of study, all the fruits of experience, all the conflicting opinions of men. I knew that I must retire to the inner sanctuary of soul-consciousness; where, for each one of us, did we but know, is the secret place of the Most High, the shadow of the Almighty. I knew that I must meditate,

[1] *Cf.* PFLEIDERER, *Christian Origins* (transl. by D. A. HUEBSCH, PH.D.; ed. London, n. d., T. Fisher Unwin), Introd., p. 12.

and wait, and watch, and pray, until a Power not myself should collect, organise, unify, interpret, and fill with life diffused impressions of a supreme reality as yet ungrasped; until that Power should tell me the secret of the Christian religion and bring me to the peace of God, which is the Truth. Long years of waiting followed years of indeterminate experience, as of a spirit moving about in worlds unrealised; years of self-contradiction in practise, because of vagueness in philosophy; years of incomplete perception of the basis of ethical reality. But they were years of growth, even as they were years of the great patience and mercy of God. If they have borne any fruitage of reality, it is that which I bring to you. I am here, as you well know, not presuming, in a spirit of pride, to teach you, who in many ways could teach me. The deep secret of the Christian religion cannot be taught externally, by one to another. No one man, nor any number of men, can project, by force of authority or weight of argument, into another's heart this sense of having found, through the religious consciousness, a basis of ethical reality upon which all one's personal life and all the life of the world may at last be unified. The things of the Spirit are spiritually discerned. But sometimes there is a power of suggestion in testimony founded on experience, and therefore I am here. Speaking wholly in the spirit of suggestion, may I now indicate the steps that should be taken, and the objects that should be considered, by one seeking in the Christian religion, as a religion of character, a basis of ethical reality?

The starting-point is one's self. Wonderful is the

fascination of the study of self. Thousands of years ago a great Hebrew lyric was written, in which the poet, after acknowledging the glories of nature, concludes that the supreme wonder of existence is man.

> When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained, what is man that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that Thou visitest him? For Thou hast made him but little lower than God, and crownest him with glory and honour.[1]

The seers of pantheism studied the Absolute through the study of the self and wrought out a philosophy of Being which, directly or indirectly, by acceptance or rejection, has affected the entire philosophical thinking of the world. It is, as I need not explain to this cultured audience, the philosophy of absolute idealism, which identifies the finite self with the Universal Self; making man and God one. Upon the basis laid down in pantheism has occurred, as I have already pointed out, further research into the mystery of the self. The attempt to fathom the secret of its being is now paralleled by the effort to discern the modes and qualities of its nature; to comprehend, that is to say, not only the existence of the self but its character. Lying evidently upon the surface of the self we find action, conduct, innumerable multitudes of deeds and words. Wonderful are these results and products of selfhood, considered in their relation to the world. We stand amazed before the potential influence of deeds and words. Many of them are, of necessity, shortlived and apparently unimportant; others carry with them incalculable and ever-

[1] Ps. 8:3–5.

lasting effects. Deeds, wrought by a single self, or by a few of these mysterious selves in co-operation, have changed the face of the world. Words, spoken ages ago, live and speak to-day, thrilling the souls of the living. Beneath the deeds and words of the self we find thought, with all varied equipments of the intellect: perception, reason, judgment, memory, consciousness, self-knowledge. Who can describe in adequate words this subtle, delicate, and beauteous gift of thought; this well of living water springing up within the mind; this eagle of mentality spreading broad pinions to soar to the heights or fly to the ends of the world; this garden of beauty, producing flowers more lovely than lilies and amaranths; this torch, kindled in the fire of eternal wisdom, to give lights of knowledge to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. But when we have taken note of action and thought, there remains a region of the self separable in theory, if not in fact, from other elements of the mind; appearing to extend down toward those depths of which I have spoken in a former lecture, the depths of the sub-conscious life. There, where the calculable and definite processes of thought broaden out toward infinity, where thoughts that can be put into words mingle with those "that break through language and escape," we discern in the self two elements, the foundations of which are planted too deep in Ultimate Being to be explored fully by reason: I mean the will and the ethical element. Will is the power of initiative; the power of choice; the executive. It reacts continually upon thought, producing decisions and their volitional effects. How the will acts I know not; in

what manner it lays hold of thought, reacts upon feeling, accomplishes choice, I know not. We must agree with von Hartmann:

> The laboratory of volition is hidden in the Unconscious; we can only get to see the finished result, and then only at the moment when it in fact comes to practical application. The glances that we throw into that laboratory never reveal those unconscious depths of the soul where occur the reaction of the will on motives and its passage into definite volition.[1]

In that solemn depth the will is not alone. There also is the ethical sense—the intuition of right. As, in the Old Testament story, there walked with the three that were thrown for conscience' sake into the furnace of fire, a fourth, having the similitude of the Son of God,[2] so, in that lowest crucible of the soul, where fiery motives play upon the will and solicit its reaction, there is another element present, having the similtude of eternal righteousness. In my last lecture I dwelt upon the ethical element in consciousness. It is the capacity of moral distinction, the power to discern good and evil. It is the sense of the value of good; the authority of good for ourselves; its right to command us, to compel us to say, "I ought."

[1] *Philosophy of the Unconscious*, Vol. I, p. 263. *Cf.* also the observation of VON HARTMANN (*op. cit.*, p. 264): "This inmost care of the individual soul, whose efflux is the character; that most strictly practical ego of the human being, to which one reckons desert and guilt, and ascribes responsibility; this peculiar essence, which we ourselves are, is still more remote from our consciousness and the sublimated ego of pure self-consciousness than anything else in us. We can most easily get to know this deepest core of ourselves in the same way as we come to know that of other men, namely, by inferences from action."

[2] *Cf.* Dan., chap. 3

The self is not one but many. Every man feels it within him, and, looking into his brother's eyes, beholds it there also. It matters not where he looks: at the brother by blood, born of the same mother; at the brother by tribe and by race, sharing the same traditions; or at the stranger, the alien, with whom he deems himself to have nothing in common. Let him look where he may, always a self looks back at him in return. Whether he will or no, as the other eyes meet his, in friendship, hatred, or indifference; in knowledge, ignorance, purity, or sin; the self is there, disguised, concealed, perverted, or confessed. Never have I had this borne in upon me with such startling clearness as in the Oriental world. My selfhood pierces through the veil, woven of a thousand strands of difference, and meets on the other side the answering eyes of a similar elemental self. So we conclude that these many selves are one; that they are not isolated facts of being, appearing fortuitously like motes in a sunbeam. They are differentiated indeed into self-contained responsible personalities, yet are they nevertheless one in the Common Ground and Source of their being. The ocean enters the land by ten thousand inlets, each distinct in itself and marked by its own environment, yet all are one in that all are filled by one inrush of a single tide. A boat may pass from inlet to inlet because upborne by a common element that enters all. So the innumerable selves that open like inlets to receive the common tide of an undifferentiated ocean of life are many yet one. Many, in that each stands in its own environment and flows in its own channel; one, in that one tide from a shoreless,

soundless sea of life flows and ebbs within their finite channels. Because of that one tide of immanent life, thoughts and feelings, intellectual and moral affinities, relationships of the spirit pass and repass, speak and answer, enter and return.

As we ponder this mystery: the oneness in diversity of the innumerable selves; the monism in pluralism, which is, I believe, the most adequate and rational interpretation of personality, reached either by philosophy or religion, we are led toward a conception of the nature of God in its relation to the nature of man.

> Monism [says Picton] may take as many forms as Spinoza's infinite substance, and we need not commit ourselves to any one of them. But so far as it stands for a devout faith that all things are ultimately one, not many—and still less two—we may safely regard it as the irreversible tendency of all the best thought of the world.[1]

With these words I find myself in hearty sympathy, although far from agreement with the conclusions reached by the author touching the Person of Christ and the survival of personality after death. We perceive that God is not a Being isolated from man, but a Source from Whose depth man is projected, toward Whose depths man's nature tends as the tidal river toward the parent sea. Because of this there are marvellous intimations of the nature of Divinity in the elemental consciousness of man. There is a sense of infiniteness that accompanies the action of his mind; a suggestion of an ideal righteousness that plays like the glittering path of

[1] *Cf.* J. Allanson Picton, *The Religion of the Universe* (London, Macmillan, 1904), p. 136.

moonlight on the breast of a river, across his moral conciousness. We see further that the greatness and infiniteness of God are not wholly alien to man's consciousness, but related thereto by the unity of life. Man cannot indeed know God's greatness nor fathom His infiniteness. He may sound the shallows of the inlet, although he cannot know the secrets of the sea. Yet between inlet and sea there is a correspondence, a tidal fellowship. So man knows that God is not a name for some gigantic and inconceivable monster of power, but for intelligible life which even here one may know in part. The inconceivability of God is not in kind but in degree. For we are His offspring and in Him we live. In language that seems to be the very product of inspiration, a Christian poet has given utterance to this all but unutterable idea:

O Majesty unspeakable and dread!
Wert Thou less mighty than Thou art,
Thou wert, O Lord! too great for our belief,
Too little for our heart.

Thy greatness would seem monstrous by the side
Of creatures frail and undivine;
Yet they would have a greatness of their own
Free and apart from Thine.

Such grandeur were but a created thing,
A spectre, terror and a grief;
Out of all keeping with a world so calm—
Oppressing our belief.

It would outgrow us from the face of things
Still prospering as we decayed;
And, like a tyrannous rival, it would feed
Upon the wrecks it made.

But what is Infinite, must be a home,
A shelter for the meanest life;
Where it is free to reach its greatest growth
Far from the touch of strife.

We share in what is Infinite; 'tis ours,
For we and it alike are Thine;
What I enjoy, Great God! by right of Thee
Is more than doubly mine.[1]

But the secret of the Christian religion cannot be found in abstract meditation on the nature of being. The conclusions to which we are brought by that meditation are, indeed, of fundamental importance; without them we have no clue to the mystery of life; with them we reach the sure ground held by many ages of Eastern philosophy and affirmed in these lectures—the ground of the Divine immanence. But from this ground of Divine immanence we must still advance. At the point where we have now arrived I am able to show you concretely how Christianity has pressed on to further conclusions touching man's life and God's Life, which are of the highest value for the world. Abstract meditation on the nature of being leads to no practical moral conclusions. Absolute idealism, that pure and perfect monism which makes God and man identical terms, is relatively a simple and easy solution of the problem of existence. But it is a solution that derives its simplicity by covering rather than by considering the most urgent facts of consciousness. Man has an invincible sense that he is in a measure free to follow or to turn from a consciously conceived ideal.

[1] F. W. Faber.

The living, throbbing experience of the moral man [to use the words of Professor James Seth of Halifax], remorse and retribution and reward, all the grief and humiliation of his life, all its joy and exaltation, imply a deep and ineradicable conviction that his destiny, if partly shaped for him by a power beyond himself, is yet, in its grand outline, in his own hands, to make it, or to mar it, as he will. All the passion of his moral experience gathers itself up in the conviction of his infinite and eternal superiority to Nature; she "cannot do otherwise;" he *can*.[1]

The absolute idealist tells him that this impression which he has of his own freedom is an illusion of ignorance, destined to disappear in the attainment of higher knowledge; that his apparent personality is but an aspect of "the all-comprehending Divine Nature, from the necessity of which all things, without exception, follow;"[2] and that the mysterious energy of self, which, to him, seems so free, is, really, no free, initiating source of conduct but a mass of sensations and desires determined by other sensations and desires that have preceded them. I need not tell you what must be the effect upon the mind, if such an explanation of will and conscience be accepted as final. It removes attention from the field of moral consciousness and concentrates it upon the field of speculative intellect, the former being adjudged a mechanism of unreality. It confuses the sense of right and wrong by causing it to associate moral distinctions with the automatic movement of other phenomena, as part of one vast shadow

[1] *Cf.* throughout an important pamphlet, *Freedom as Ethical Postulate* (Edinburgh and London, William Blackwood & Sons, 1891).

[2] SETH, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

play. It leads us to think, as Martineau has phrased the thought, that

> our belief in our own independence arises merely from a partial ignorance of the complex influences that mould our decisions, and that, when our inward history is all unfolded and laid bare, each volition will be found to have its place in a regular consecution of phenomena as uniform as those of physical nature and as little open to the entrance of contingency.[1]

It tempts us to think lightly of the moral imperative, and its unconditional demand; to set good aside as without absolute value, and, abstracting the mind from ethical problems and responsibilities, to fix it on a colourless metaphysic of existence, while conduct, divorced from reason, follows the devices and desires of an impulsive naturalism. The Distinctive Moral Grandeur of the Christian Religion consists in its refusal to accept absolute idealism as a complete solution of the problem of existence. It agrees with absolute idealism, as these lectures have abundantly shown, in its establishment of a unifying Source and Ground, but it cannot obliterate human personality by ignoring the significance of the moral consciousness. It does not undertake to dispel the mystery (a mystery that some have openly called an antithesis) in which we shroud the problem of Being when we affirm the monistic ground of the universe and also affirm that God's determining force is so far withdrawn from the human will that the will becomes a real, self-electing other toward Himself. Nor does the Christian religion in any degree lose sight of the many

[1] *Cf.* "Determinism and Free Will" in MARTINEAU, *A Study of Religion* (2d ed., Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1889), Vol. II, p. 185.

influences, inherited or otherwise produced, that work upon our will to affect, if possible to predetermine, its volitions. But when allowance has been made for these influences, concerning which we may not be responsible, the Christian religion sees, grasps, organises the whole system of thinking around the central fact of a permanent self, an innermost ego that is so far free as to be an other to God; a moral person, responsible for its choices and acts. "There remains," says Martineau, "the indelible conviction that we are not bound hand and foot by either our present incentives or our own past; but that, drag as they may, a power remains with us to make a new beginning along another path than theirs."[1] The limits of my time prevent me from expanding the thought upon which we are now engaged. But even a momentary glance shows us in what directions it must inevitably lead and what kinds of moral needs and aspirations it must inevitably suggest. You see at once that the whole of conduct, the whole of thought, all that we are and do, comes into the moral field of vision and must be dealt with from the moral point of view. And what, my friends, are the two realities that appear and fill the universe with their conflicting presences when we advance from the position of philosophical pantheism to the Christian affirmation of the personal responsibility of the self? They are evil and good; moral evil and moral good; that is—sin and righteousness. I have shown you the Distinctive Moral Grandeur of the Christian Religion, when I have shown you that it exists to deal with these two ethical realities, moral evil

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 226, "Psychology of Voluntary Action."

and moral good. This is its reason for being; its message to the world. It is a *religion of character.*

It has often been said, and in this lecture I have, in effect, said, that the limitation in disciples of pantheistic thought is relative inability to realise practical moral distinctions, to *feel* the difference between right and wrong. This relative inability I do not for a moment associate with the persons themselves as inherent in their character, but with the speculative tendency of certain philosophical aspects. While philosophical pantheism thus may be said to work to the disadvantage of practical morality, it is, however, a superb preparation for it. Who is so prepared to measure the tragedy of sin, to renounce it himself, and to work for the deliverance of others, as he who has studied the mystery of Being and believes that the Eternal One Who differentiates His own self-subsisting energy into the infinite variety of finite existences is still immanent and living in every one of these dependent modes of Being, and who believes that it is because "all finite beings are only partially individual and still remain in vital union with God that they are able to enter into relations with the Eternal Being with Whom their own existence is in some measure indivisibly conjoined"?[1] There is no finer preparation than this to qualify one to enter, not nominally and externally, but inwardly and profoundly, the Christian life. It is the immemorial heritage of the East thus to conceive of Being. Men of all Oriental faiths, consciously or unconsciously, have shared this heritage; it is in the air; it is in the fibre of your souls.

[1] *Cf.* UPTON; quoted in Lecture III, p. 69.

Therefore I look for the East to produce the most spiritual type of Christianity that has yet appeared on earth. The Christianity of many has been superficial and shortlived who were trained in the deistic conceptions that have, alas, prevailed through large portions of the Western world. The reason is obvious: a fundamental deficiency in the conception of God. He was conceived as a Being apart; dwelling by Himself, speaking to man externally by means of a law; much as the state speaks to its citizens by means of laws. Obedience was an outgoing homage to an external Divinity; the forms of the Church were the expressions of that obedience; righteousness tended to become identified with regularity in making those expressions, sin with carelessness in their fulfilment. It is no surprise to find a religion of externalism built upon the foundation of an external God, and a divided, shallow, inconsistent life of thought and conduct produced by a deficient theory of self, as a creature having by nature no affinity with God and only joined to Him through a process fixed by law and consummated by sacraments. I speak with sadness of this temperamental tendency of the West to externalise God and believe in a self wholly severed from His Essence, and needing the authority of churches and priests to bring it in relation thereto. How this has hindered the inward development of the Western religious consciousness and fostered the overgrowth of its ecclesiasticism! Few and exceptional for many centuries were the mystics of the West, the souls indifferent to forms and orders, whose interest in religion was "to realise, in thought and feeling, the immanence of the

temporal in the eternal and of the eternal in the temporal,"[1] that is, to know their abiding in the Living God and the abiding of the Living God in them. Wondrous is the development of the mystical element in Western Christianity since the idealism of the East began, like a sunrise, to temper the gloom of our austere ecclesiasticism. With that growth of the mystical sense, the sense of God's oneness with man, there is coming in the West as there must ever come, when true mysticism is also truly Christian, an intensified consciousness of sin, not as an outward breach of ceremonial commandments but as an inward rending of the unity of life, as a revolt of the will from its Source and Ground, as disloyalty of self-consciousness to an ideal of holy love engendered within us by the indwelling Essence of the Eternal, as the canker that is eating out the heart of the individual, and the heart of the world. The religion of character, inwardly apprehended, gives to the soul an experience of moral suffering not produced by external appeals, threatenings, or laws. It is the consequence of inward knowledge of the mystery of our own being: God in us, the Immanent Eternal Spring of consciousness, we in Him as the Source and Ground of all that we are, in Whose depths our sub-conscious life loses itself, as the river in the sea. It is a needed suffering, to bring us to ethical reality; to humiliate the complacent pride of exterior religiousness; to give us, through the death of the superficial self, access to a deeper life. It consists in knowing at last what is the offence, the shame, the bitterness of sin. "Against Thee, Thee only, have I

[1] INGE, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 5; quoted in Lecture II, p. 35.

sinned, and done that which is evil in Thy sight."[1] But through this experience comes the unifying of life. Its divided selfhood is healed. Our mystical consciousness of God becomes at length a witness not of anguish and humiliation, but of peace. Aspiration comes to us. The sense of the absoluteness of good and of its value for us is established with power. The ethical imperative speaks with command and is answered with joy. We want to know and to attain the best. The power to discern between lower and higher affections asserts itself. The unified soul, disburdened of its weights and hindrances, seeks the things that are above. Clear-eyed, sensitive to righteousness, it separates the less from the greater, rising ever in thought toward a purer atmosphere.

At length ethical aspiration can rise no higher. It comes to that which, for it, is supreme. That supreme is holy love. Its beauty is the beauty of holiness, its passion is the passion of renunciation. Obedience to this love means abolition of selfishness, dethroning of pride, patience toward the weak, compassion toward the erring, sympathy for the ignorant, tenderness for the sorrowing, participation in the universal life, reverence for all men, faith in humanity.[2] The unified soul discerns in holy love the highest ideal of moral consciousness. It conceives that this may be the inmost character of God. Therefore to this it consecrates itself, and lives henceforth as one born again. My brethren, in this delineation of the ethical consciousness in a Christian life, I have opened to you my heart. How much of

[1] Ps. 51:4.

[2] *Cf.* Lecture IV, p. 131.

what I have said is autobiography, how much is the record of experiences that I have been privileged to observe in others, need not here be said. It is enough that every word of this is true. And being true, it suggests a question, which is, for Christianity, the question of questions. I shall ask this question and give answer to it as I close. If the distinction of the Christian religion be that it is a religion of character, what answer does it give to the highest moral aspirations of our souls? This, I affirm, is the question of questions. Our capacities reach out into the universe, demanding appropriate and sufficient answers. The hand, with its skill and strength, demands the fabric of a material world to deal with, and finds it waiting to be used. The power of aesthetic judgment calls for beauty in all realms of being, and finds it in nature, in art, in letters. The vital consciousness that is in us, a thrilling sense of unconquerable life, demands an answering assurance, and finds it in the infinitude of God. The moral imperative in the soul, the perception of the value of goodness, the power of ethical aspiration, the tentative sense of having reached the best in reaching the ideal of holy love, is the involuntary cry, not of consciousness alone, but of our sub-conscious life, for some authoritative answer coming from the unknowable depths of God into the range of our knowledge, to confirm that best, to identify it with Absolute Reality. What answer does the religion of character give to this involuntary cry of the soul? Its answer is the *fact of Jesus Christ.* My interest in setting this fact before you here is that of one who believes profoundly and

unreservedly in his subject. My belief is a passionate yet reasoned conviction. For me, the assurance that the historic Christ is the Divine answer to the soul's supreme moral aspiration is as conclusive as the assurance of my own moral personality. My interest in bringing the fact of Christ to your attention in this form is furthermore the interest of one who views with alarm and sorrow a characteristic tendency in modern Western criticism to discard the witness concerning Christ given by the philosophical culture of the first and second centuries (a Greek culture with Oriental affinities and insights) and to measure Him, after the manner of Western externalism, by purely naturalistic methods remote from His time. My interest, finally, is that of one who looks to the sublime elements of the Oriental Consciousness as the source of power that can counteract this enfeebled apprehension of the fact of Christ, and give back to the world the fervour, depth, and sacredness of Apostolic thought and feeling. The stupendous power of Christ, discerned by those philosophic minds, lifted them to conceptions of Divine Life and fellowship fast fading out from the world's consciousness in the glare and noise of Western progress. Augustine said of St. John: "Such men dwelt apart in loneliness like that of the great mountains, whose loftiness is measured not by comparison nor yet by imagination but by the flood of blessing which they pour down on the little hills and plains below."[1] Hidden in India and in the Farther East, there are, I believe, such potential apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ; men not alien to the philosophy that

[1] Quoted by PICTON, *Mystery of Matter*, p. 265.

governed St. John and some of his successors; accustomed to unworldly contemplation of God; unmoved by the audacious self-possession of modern irreverence. I look for such to emerge at the bidding of the Spirit, to address their minds to the fact of Jesus Christ, and to lay, not the East only, but the world, under obligation by restoring to the hungering, groping, fettered souls of men their birthright and their emancipation.

The fact of Jesus Christ is a threefold fact. To grasp it in its entirety, one must keep in view and consider as aspects of one truth, the life purpose of Jesus Christ as shown historically in His Visible Ministry, the continuous power of Jesus Christ in the Christian Consciousness, and the Divinity of Jesus Christ as the Revelation of the Heart of God. These aspects acted and reacted in the philosophic consciousness of the first and second centuries, as the spiritual eyesight became adjusted to the new Light that had come into the world. We have observed how even the common happenings of our lives, many times, are not apprehended in their full meaning in the hour of their occurrence and of their sensible perception. Not until afterward does the mind have leisure to bring to bear its reflective powers, and grasp the real value of what has taken place. A friend crosses our path, tarries a moment in eager conversation, and is gone. In the brief moment of his tarrying we are absorbed in perceiving the outward data of his presence. We look in his face, hear his voice, touch his hand, listen to his words, bid him good-bye. In after hours, memory, collecting these perceptual impressions, brings them to reason, which ponders and interprets.

We understand now the unwonted mark of joy or sorrow on his face, we discern the deeper meaning in his words, we feel, as we felt not at the moment, the great peace or conflict that was in his soul. Our reflective consciousness gives the truer record of the fact. So went Jesus of Nazareth, for a few short years, in and out before men. By many His presence was not noticed, by a few it was admired and loved, by none was it understood completely until all was over: the gracious words, the deeds of sacrificial tenderness, the stainless, shadowless living, the loneliness, the secret affinities of power, the burden of sins not His own, the patient anguish, the words from the Cross, the death silence, the awaking, the coming forth, the world-wide commandment: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation."[1] Then the reflective powers of their minds were roused and their hearts began to burn within them. They recalled His words and the spirit of His Life. They comprehended His purpose and perceived that it was universal. They knew that He was a prophet, but not like any other prophet, for in Him wisdom found its source. They knew that He was great, but not with the mere greatness of men, for men centre their greatness in themselves, and His seemed to go forth from Himself and be lost in sacrifice, upon the world.

It is confessedly difficult [says one] for any who feel their hearts warm toward the spiritual glory of Christ, to put into words the impression He makes upon them. For most of the notes of human greatness seem weak, inapplicable, even incongruous when attributed to Him. For instance, individuality, which is so striking a

[1] Mark 16:15.

characteristic of all rightful kings of men, seems very inapt in a description of the Person of Christ. That His character and His powers do, on any interpretation, stand alone in world-wide history, every one must feel. But the loneliness is not that of individuality. For this word is suggestive of some intense, self-centred fire. And it is rather the absence of this that makes the greatness of Christ so sacred.[1]

They recalled the philosophic ideals of a Wisdom, an intelligible Word, coming out from the abyss of the Unknowable to interpret the secrets of the Divine intelligence, to be a Mediator between the Eternal and the ephemeral, the Sum of the thoughts of God, the Idea of Ideas. And as these recollections of philosophical aspiration came to them and set their hearts on fire they perceived that they were divinely kindled, as the burning glass borrows its power of kindling from the sun.[2] Through distant Oriental sources they had entered and filled the Greek consciousness; to find, as it seemed, their correction and completion in Christ. Therefore these majestic souls, on whom Christ's power had fallen, came through years of reflective experience to discern His meaning and His nature. For them He was the loving Spirit of the Lord that filleth all the earth, the Brightness of the everlasting Light, the unspotted Mirror of the Power of God, the Image of his Goodness, the Prophet of the Most High, the Mediator, the Heavenly Man, representing before the eyes of God the whole family upon earth.[3] He was the Word that was in the

[1] *Cf.* PICTON, *Christian Pantheism*, p. 43.

[2] CLEMENT of Alexandria, *Strom.*, VI, 17, 19.

[3] In this account of Alexandrian Christology I have been much helped by CANON BIGG, *Christian Platonists of Alexandria*.

beginning with God, that came from the Unknowable into the knowable, as a Son from a Father, that was made flesh and dwelt among men, that men might behold His glory, full of grace and truth. It was a wondrous interpretation of a wondrous fact; an interpretation rich with the mystical spirit of the Oriental Consciousness. Time only could show whether it was an advance upon pantheism or a restatement of it in another form. It might grow away from the historical and the ethical, and, interested only in the metaphysical, might pass into the upper air of theory, and be lost in a maze of speculative deductions. After two thousand years of testing in the crucible of experience, the Christian religion comes to us to-day a religion of character founded in the dignity of Christ as the Moral Revelation of God, the answer to the highest aspiration of man's soul. Like gold thrice refined, both elements, the historical and the mystical, have been subject to every test that the wisdom, pride, or sin of man can apply; and both remain to-day. By hatred and love, by evil report and good report, by prosperity and adversity, by learning and culture, by ignorance and superstition, by science, philosophy, and ethics, have these elements been tested until the essential truth of the historical and the mystical in the Christian religion have been completely proven, and have taken their place among the things that cannot be shaken. The life purpose of Jesus Christ answers and fulfils the highest possible aspiration in the moral consciousness of humanity. We cannot feel the absolute value of good nor recognise its authority in higher senses than appear in Christ. From this we conclude

that He is the outspeaking Voice from the shoreless, soundless depths of Infinite Being, confirming goodness as the inner Essence of the Heart of God. And this Christ we know immediately in our souls. All that He is historically in and for the life of the world, He is personally in and for each one of us who immediately and mystically know Him, and, knowing Him, know God in Him. But the world, blinded by material objects and hardened by self-centred motives, needs a fresh interpretation of Christ from some human source where faith in the Invisible is still the great reality, and interest in the ultimate problems of the soul, still an unspent river of delight. In the day when the Oriental Consciousness perceives the nature of this soul-chastening, soul-redeeming, soul-unifying Christ of God, and gives its sublime powers to the religion of character as, since the dawn of history, it has given them to the religion of Being, there shall come back upon all nations, from the ancestral home of the world's religious consciousness, a recovery of the essence that must live beneath the form, of the spirit that must speak through the letter, of the morality of holy love that must purge and refashion the morality of custom and law, by setting right above might, and ministrations of brotherhood above aggressions of power.

LECTURE SIX

THE MINISTRY OF THE ORIENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN A WORLD-WIDE KINGDOM OF CHRIST

In closing the previous lecture, upon the Distinctive Moral Grandeur of the Christian Religion, I made use of the following words:

> In the day when the Oriental Consciousness perceives the nature of this soul-chastening, soul-redeeming, soul-unifying Christ of God and gives its sublime powers to the religion of character, as, since the dawn of history, it has given them to the religion of Being, there shall come back upon all nations, from the ancestral home of the world's religious consciousness, a recovery of the essence that must live beneath the form, of the spirit that must speak through the letter, of the morality of holy love that must purge and refashion the morality of custom and law, by setting right above might, and ministrations of brotherhood above aggressions of power.

It is in the spirit of these words, and for the better understanding of their meaning, that I enter upon the sixth and last lecture of this course, taking for my theme "The Ministry of the Oriental Consciousness in a World-wide Kingdom of Christ." I have not at any time concealed or attempted to conceal my ultimate desire in the delivery of these lectures. It has been apparent to all that have heard them that my heart is with the East in respect, admiration, and love. It has also appeared that my belief is unbounded in the Divine source and world-wide significance of the Christian

religion as a religion of character. I have repeatedly expressed my dissatisfaction with some aspects of religious thinking in the Western world and my fear that tendencies are at work which, unless modified by powerful counter-influences, may diffuse, at all events for a time, an enfeebled and superficial estimate of some of the deeper truths and values of the Christian religion. Such a result, even if temporary, would be a calamity not for the West alone, but for the world. It would feed the spirit of aggression, authority, institutional pride, externalism, and the consuming love of pleasure. These things flourish in the soil of the natural heart, and are not subdued by theoretical ethics, but only by the growth of spiritual reverence and holy love born of inward communion with God. The pride of external authority is never merely a local ill. It becomes a devouring passion, not only thinking more and more of self, but less and less of others. It takes to itself rights of conquest and persuades itself that those rights are Divine. It binds on men's shoulders burdens grievous to be borne, and claims, in the act, to be doing God service. This as history shows becomes a far-spreading calamity. The serious fact in those aspects of religious thinking to which I have alluded with dissatisfaction, is that the deeper truths and values of the Christian religion which modern civilisation tends to depreciate are those which have the greatest power to subdue worldly pride, to correct cruel and intolerant ambition, to restrain worship of visible and sensuous ends, to teach men and nations gentleness, patience, sympathy, self-sacrifice. These truths and values lie

chiefly in the mystical realm. They have to do with God's abiding in the soul and the soul's abiding in God, with knowledge as a religious experience, immediate, self-attesting. They have to do with the Universal Life, the substance underlying and unifying all individualities, making all men members one of another. They have to do, in particular, with the Divinity of Jesus Christ as the background of His ethical authority; that He is, not an occasional teacher who arose, testified, and departed; but the Eternal Answer which has come forth from unknowable depths of the Infinite, to confirm the soul's highest moral ideal, to disclose the holy love which is the central principle in the Heart of God, to interpret that love by sacrifice.

The argument that I shall attempt to present in this, my last lecture, grows out of the above-mentioned facts. The dominating civilisations of the world, with their fierce cry of progress, which is like the shout of a cavalry charge, turn from, if they do not trample on, essential qualities of the Christian religion. Tenacious of forms, they become, through hardness of heart, unable to retain the spirit of that religion. Reverencing the Cross as a symbol, they are prevented, by ambition, from conforming to the mind of the Crucified. This, as I shall show you, is not a situation of merely local importance. It is a calamity, progressively affecting the whole world; inasmuch as the spirit of the Christian religion, the mind of Christ, contains in principle the redress of all grievances springing from injustice, inhumanity, and unscrupulous ambition. It is a calamity already felt by the East and likely to be felt more keenly,

according to the caprice or passion of these civilisations. It is a calamity that cannot be averted by the appeal to external force, answering blow with blow; for its cause is not physical but spiritual. The dominating civilisations of the twentieth century are what they are, not in one country alone, but in all countries, selfish, aggressive, violent, in matters pertaining to world-politics and race relations, because the mind of men is set on outward ends and the faculty of inward vision fails through disuse. The prestige of nations, like a glare of insufferable light, blinds the eye of the soul. Sins of injustice, tyrannous impositions of physical power are condoned at the bar of modern civilisation by an ethical sense dulled by unfamiliarity with the larger truths of the Spirit. That this tendency cannot run unchecked without plunging the world in fresh sorrows, I am certain. That it may be checked by the influx of some powerful counter-sentiment, I am sure. That that check is to be given by the East, I believe. But in what way? I cannot think that the East would be quite true to its best tradition, nor that it would rise quite to its own ideal, if it sought to rebuke and check these excesses by corresponding polities of violence and retaliation. Not that courage, skill, or power are lacking to qualify the East in rendering measure for measure, a full return in kind for all that she has received. The brilliant and self-contained Empire of Japan has given expression to that courage, skill, and power in a manner that convincingly suggests the ability of the East to meet the West on its own terms, to fight it with its own weapons. The salutary effect of that

demonstration appears in many ways. Yet I cannot conceive that it points to a final solution of contemporary difficulties, nor that it represents the highest ministry open to the East on behalf of the world. The terrible sword of the East, smiting in righteous retribution, might palliate but could not remove the present difficulty. For that difficulty is spiritual and may not be reached by the thrust of carnal weapons. The core of the difficulty is in the spirit of the dominating civilisations, which have gained outwardly, but lost inwardly. They have gained in knowledge of the constitution and use of matter, in application of force, in theories of government, social order, liberty, individual rights and destinies. They have lost in depth of God-consciousness whereby alone all theories are saved from narrow interpretation and formal use. They have gained in outlook, but lost in vision. They have gained in ethical ideal, but lost in mystical apprehension of the Source and Ground of that ideal. The present situation calls, not for an answer of wrath, but for an answer of wisdom. It needs to be dealt with, not by an antagonist, but by an enlightener. It is a case not for the warrior so much as for the prophet. The tension now upon the world will not yield to force. If relaxed for the moment at one point it tightens at another. It results from the power of traditional ideas to control the imagination, and necessitate the policy, of governments. Association of national glory with military achievement; tendency of power toward oppression; territorial jealousy, exploiting of weakness by strength; increase of armed force; diplomatic belligerency, like perpetual mutter-

ings of distant thunder, seem to predetermine the spirit of the dominating civilisations of the world. The internal life of these nations is not more satisfactory at the present time than their external relations. Poverty is not sensibly alleviated. Labour troubles are not less, but more, acute, and accompanied with more ominous demonstrations. Certain social vices are believed to be increasing. A sinister type of practical atheism extends its influence. In the meantime the ideals of thoughtful men are more lofty than ever before. Counsels of perfection abound. The Fatherhood of God is cherished as an approximate expression of His Nature. The universal brotherhood of man is a watchword of social theory. Abhorrence of war professes to increase on the ground that war is a survival from lower civilisation and should be displaced by arbitration. Sympathy with suffering finds expression in a measure which, upon occasion, becomes sublime. There is found a strange blending of evil and good. Light is in the world but the darkness comprehends it not. Good holds evil somewhat in check. Evil keeps good from triumphant advance. The outcome is negative. It is like the grappling of well-matched wrestlers: a long struggle on the same ground. It is impossible to look upon this long-drawn battle with indifference, for our own interests, and those of all the world, are involved. No interests are more surely or deeply involved in the pending issues than those of the East; for as go the dominant civilisations, so goes the world. If the Western nations are to become more possessed of the pride of militarism, more aggressive and belligerent, more

grasping and audacious, it means for the East more sorrow, injustice, and deprivation of rights. If, on the other hand, some new influence is to be brought that shall break the present deadlock between good and evil, by liberating fresh spiritual forces to soften the hearts and uplift the purposes of men, the first to feel the beneficence of the new order will be the East.

Two questions at once present themselves: Of what nature should this influence be, and from whence may it come? As to its nature one may speak with confidence. The influence most sorely needed by modern civilisation, to soften its asperities, correct its abuses, and lift its aims, is not more of ethical idealism, but more of the spirit of religion, which means more consciousness of the indwelling Life of God. Ethical idealism is the sense of knowing what ought to be. The spirit of religion is the power to live up to that knowledge. There is no lack of the first, there is a dearth of the last. Never was there an age when thought soared higher in the realm of ethical theory, or analysed more acutely the moral forces. Never was the desire more compelling for a Kingdom of God on earth, a kingdom of righteousness, peace, and social love. The Western world has its prophets of the ideal, and their sight is clear, even as their hearts are pure and warm with love. But ideals, however great and just, cannot produce results in a civilisation that lacks the spirit of religion, even as palm trees cannot come to their fruitage in an atmosphere untempered by tropical warmth. In this I state the exact point of deficiency in the modern world. The forms, doctrines, and

institutions of the Christian religion cover the West and, to some extent, enter the East. Individual lives and groups of lives are to be found in relative abundance possessing the inward spirit of that religion, the spirit of holy and sacrificial love, formed by enlightened knowledge of God. But these individuals and groups are not strong enough to affect race tendencies and instincts that determine the temper of Western civilisation. I shall speak presently of those tendencies. Great in themselves and invaluable for the advance of the world, they run toward external issues, formal results, and brilliant ideals. They lack subjectivity, the power of concentration upon the Unseen, the spirit of religion. Hence Christianity, accepted and interpreted only by the West, moves away from the burning altars of its earlier and semi-Oriental interpreters, and becomes cold, formal, unspiritual. It cannot be otherwise until there is the influx of some powerful counter-sentiment, represented not by individual but racial gifts and qualities, a sentiment of gentleness, of reverence; of exalting thought above action, of tempering impetuosity with meditation. Such a sentiment is foreign to Western civilisation as a whole. It cannot be expected to develop within it. It must come from some other source. Martineau in his *Study of Religion* speaks of the word "pantheism" as seeming "to mark a temperament more than a system;" and of pantheistic systems of philosophy he says "the tendency which gives rise to them is so foreign to our prevailing English genius, that it is not easy to awaken much sympathy with it, or to give a clear impression of the theory it has

created."[1] This naïve statement is precisely true. The West has little patience with the pantheistic temperament. Its natural interests are scientific and historical. Its treasure is the world; and where its treasure is, there is its heart also. As the West, in the course of time, has conformed its civilisation to these interests, it has progressively conformed its interpretation of Christianity to the same interests, scientific and historical. This is good in outward result, but deficient in inward spirit, and, because thus deficient, harmful. The counter-sentiment of gentleness, of reverence, of exalting thought above action, of tempering impetuosity with meditation belongs to the East. To her God has given the spirit of religion more than the form. The religious qualities of the Eastern mind lend themselves to interpretation more than to observation. Her calm, reflective gaze ignores the transitory and is lost in contemplation of the Eternal. It is to that spirit that I appeal, in this closing lecture. I seek to call it forth from its traditional seclusion; to enlist it in the service of mankind. Not by polities of violence and retaliation shall the East correct the excesses of selfishness and injustice that now appear in the dominating civilisations of the world. Blow answering blow but hardens hearts already hard and infuriates national ambitions already over-stimulated. There is a better way. I would see the East rise to her glorious height and face the modern world, her eyes not blazing with revenge but beaming with holy love; her hand not grasping the sword, but opening the Christian Scripture, too little understood

[1] Vol. II, p. 133 (Oxford, 1889).

by those who have had it longest; her voice not raised in wrath but speaking, with measured gentleness, the deeper mysteries of Jesus Christ. I would see the East overcome evil with good. I would behold the teacher of the deeper truths vanquish the tyrant-spirit of the modern age. That I may make myself well understood in a matter which I can say with truth is more vital to me than my own life, let me freely speak to you, men and brethren, of three things: the deeper mysteries of Jesus Christ; the qualities in modern civilisation that blind men to these mysteries; the qualities in Oriental Consciousness that are divinely empowered to interpret them.

I deem it the highest honour that life can contain to speak with freedom to your deliberative minds concerning the deeper mysteries of Jesus Christ. In doing so I feel that your great pantheistic inheritances qualify you in an exceptional degree not only to apprehend the spirit in which I speak, but to carry my statement on to conclusions more ultimate than those, which I, as an Occidental, may have reached or may be capable of reaching. I have long rested on the belief that the deeper mysteries of Jesus Christ may not be unfolded to the world until East joins West for their interpretation. Precisely for this reason I am little surprised that, up to the present time, the East, regarding Christ merely as a *Guru*, a gifted teacher of the past, rejects His Divine claim. So long as He is conceived by the Oriental Consciousness as a teacher only, however distinguished, sentiments of loyalty to other teachers must inhibit you from acknowledging Christ to be

supreme. Why indeed should He claim supremacy if but a teacher! You have had great masters and seers, a glorious train, extending back through ages. Being dead, they yet speak to you. Into that company you are willing to admit Christ, for He was a great teacher. His wisdom was unsearchable, and His speech most gracious. Some said in their enthusiasm, "Never man spake like this man." But why single Him out from others, to place on His brow the chaplet of supremacy? The objection seems to me unanswerable, if Christ is a teacher only. Why crown a Semitic prophet, and leave the mighty Aryans uncrowned? It has been said that the Divinity of Christ must act as a bar to the Christianising of the Oriental world. So it must be while the thought remains that He is but a prophet for Whom His disciples are trying to win a title; or so long as His Divinity is grounded on any narrow or local system of theology. "Pantheism," as Martineau said, "is a temperament rather than a system," and minds with that great inheritance must move toward the deeper mysteries of the Christian religion in their own way and by their own processes of assimilation, or not at all. But of nothing am I more sure than that the day is coming when the East, so far from being repelled by the Divinity of Christ, shall become the champion and exponent of that Divinity, recovering its meaning for the world. For it is a truth that, rightly conceived, is so enormous in its suggestions and implications, points to such mysteries, lifts to such experiences, that it is supremely adapted to the Oriental Consciousness and the Oriental Con-

sciousness to it. The West has ever felt its power, and pondered its meaning. So long as the Eastern influence continued potent in the West, and wherever it still lingers, the deeper mysteries of Jesus Christ have preserved their precious meanings. But there are certain motives in the dominating civilisations of the West that react against those meanings, set them aside as too mystical, too much allied to the subjective, and offer others in their stead that combine more readily with what is called a practical age. These substitutions, consisting mainly in deifications of the words of Jesus, with rationalistic accounts of His Person, have helped to make the modern world what it is. When I turn from these utilitarian substitutions, products of a critical externalism, to speak to an Eastern audience of the deeper mysteries of Jesus Christ, I feel delight mingled with fear: delight, in presenting to religious minds that which is the essence of the religion of character; fear, through the sense of incapacity to speak adequately to such a theme. With the Psalmist, I cry, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it."[1]

For the purpose of illustration, yet not without hope that the illustration is also the fact, I shall assume that, among the most cultivated minds assembled here, are some that ask a way of access to these deeper mysteries of Jesus Christ, saying: If He be more than a teacher of antiquity, Who gathered disciples, and spoke words of exceeding wisdom, how shall one attempt to comprehend what and who He is? The answer must be

[1] Ps. 139:6.

threefold. He who would have access to the deeper mysteries must begin his approach in the historical fact: the life purpose of Jesus Christ. From this he must advance into experience: the power of Jesus Christ in the Christian Consciousness. From this he is prepared to advance into revelation: the Divinity of Jesus Christ as the Revelation of the Heart of God. No thoughtful mind, travelling this noble threefold path, can fail at least to apprehend, whether ultimately it accepts them or not, the deeper mysteries of Jesus Christ.

The approach to knowledge of the Divinity of Christ begins in history. He appears in the world within a measurable distance from the present age; well within the period covered by scientific research. The place of Christ in history is less ancient than some of the most treasured religious inheritances of India, visible monuments of which exist at the present moment. The pillars of Asoka, the magnificent rock temples of Nassik and Karli are more ancient than the historical period of Jesus Christ.[1] Notwithstanding this, persistent efforts were made in Europe, soon after the middle of the last century, to undermine the historical reality of Christ and to relegate Him to the cloudland of poetry and myth. It became necessary, therefore, to subject the evidence to the most rigorous tests known to science. Every traditional belief, every statement of the New Testament in favour of His historical reality was passed through the fires of research. Out of the alembic came

[1] *Cf.* FERGUSSON, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* (London, Murray, 1876), pp. 47, 52, 110–22.

the gold of fact. It is now known that He appeared at the time alleged. He did His works, uttered His teachings, and, with majestic devotion to His life purpose, died a public and suffering death. In the belief of His disciples, and upon their solemn and uncontradicted testimony, He arose from the dead, and, after making provision for the diffusion of His message and His influence throughout all nations, withdrew His presence from sight; henceforth continuing it for ever by means of a spiritual power, exerted inwardly upon the consciousness of men. I shall never forget an afternoon in 1902 when I drove from Benares to Sarnath, and stood in the silence of the Deer Park beside the tope that commemorates the Great Master, the Buddha, who, a thousand years before its erection, taught his disciples there. The sun was setting. Floods of golden light irradiated the exquisite band of sculptured ornament, and shed calm glory upon the neighbouring mounds and ruins. Through the silence, the still, small voice of an immortal past spoke in my soul; and then, as often before and after, I measured the greatness of your religious inheritances. They qualify you, my friends, as belief and reverence ever qualify, to stand with me within the sacred enclosure of the Christian Scripture, while together we think of the life purpose of Jesus Christ. Very gradual was the manner in which the influence of the personal presence of Christ took hold of His immediate disciples. It was an influence deeper and more potent, while less obvious, than that produced by brilliant teachings or striking miracles. The disciples came slowly to realise that what Christ

was in Himself was greater than anything He taught or did. A modern writer says:

> We are apt to depreciate the potency of Christ's Personal Influence on His disciples, because personal influence is so subtle in its operation; because it does not, like teaching and miracle, formally challenge a verdict. Yet every one knows that the hold which a moral leader has over his followers is not created simply by the thrilling utterances or heroisms of great moments. By these, indeed, he first arrests and inspires them. But their belief in him only gains depth and completeness, if those quieter hours which show the real man reveal the same spirit which shines so brilliantly at special times. Every part of conduct adds its colour to the impression. The tone in which he speaks, his bearing under suspicion, his reserves, his silences are the deep roots out of which alone springs that sure confidence, which, as Burke says, "is a plant of slow growth."[1]

He who, desiring knowledge of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, begins his approach in the history of His Life as lived on earth finds that the conviction of Divinity does not chiefly lay hold of the mind by considering the teachings and the miracles of the Lord, but by slowly approaching His life purpose. His teachings are indeed utterances of perfect wisdom and crystalline purity. They strike at the centre of man's need. They answer the questions of the soul. They divide evil from good as with a surgeon's knife. His miracles display control in the realms of life and death, and, by their tender helpfulness, show His amazing consideration and love for man. But these outgoings of wisdom and power, that appear on the surface of the history and first attract

[1] *Cf.* FORREST, *Christ of History and of Experience* (3d ed., Edinburgh, 1901), pp. 127, 128.

the eye, are less convincing than that personal effect of His own consciousness which emanates from His Life, apart from word or deed; which *is* the life itself. The Divinity of Christ appears, in history, chiefly in the purpose governing His life. Anyone who studies the life of Christ as recorded in the New Testament must feel its perfect symmetry and simplicity. One vast purpose, progressively expressed, filled and controlled His mind. As a child He felt it in anticipation and said: "I must be about my Father's business." As a sufferer, dying on the Cross, He felt it in consummation and cried: "It is finished." It has been said of Him: "No other career ever had so much unity, no other biography is so simple. Men in general take up scheme after scheme, as circumstances suggest one or another. But Christ formed one plan and executed it."[1] The plan of Christ was the royal plan of a kingly mind. It was, in essence, a plan to give happiness to the world by establishing a world-wide kingdom of righteousness; "to create a new society which would stand in a peculiar relation to God, and which should have a legislation different from and higher than that which springs up in secular states."[2] In conceiving this society, this kingdom of righteousness, His purpose was not exclusive but inclusive. It was for humanity. To be a human being was to be eligible for entrance into this Kingdom of God. It was a vast purpose to unify the world, to gather together all nations and kindreds and peoples into an ethical relationship of goodness,

[1] *Cf.* Sir J. R. Seeley, *Ecce Homo*, chap. iii, "The Kingdom of God" (ed. Macmillan, 1904).

[2] Seeley, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

peace, and love. Of this Kingdom He Himself was to be the Head. His meek and lowly spirit felt no inconsistency in making this claim. For He knew Himself to be a King indeed, yet not after the pattern of an earthly sovereign. Pride of station, pomp of equipage, haughty self-seclusion, arbitrary exertion of power were abhorrent to Him. He neither possessed nor desired earthly honour and resources. He went through the world a lowly pilgrim. He had not where to lay His head. Yet the consciousness of power was in His soul, and when He taught, it was as one having authority. This glorious sense of power He attributed to His mystical oneness with the Eternal Father, from Whom He came, and on Whose behalf He lived and died. His throne was the radiant purpose in His own soul. Surely it was a throne more splendid than the jewelled thrones of emperors. From it He looked out on the whole world and saw it as one potential society of righteous happiness, bound to Himself by harmony with His spirit. "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother."[1] Magnificent as is this kingly conception of Jesus Christ, it becomes yet more magnificent when we consider the end, the law, the life, the inspiration, and the power of this Kingdom. Its end was liberty, intellectual and moral, through the power of truth. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."[2] He proposed no esoteric doctrine to be proudly held by a few; He kept back no secrets which man was able to receive. He wanted all men to come to the

[1] Matt. 12:50. [2] John 8:32.

knowledge of the truth that their minds might be at liberty, in the freedom of the sons of God. He wanted men to think, to know, to choose. But to Him intellectual liberty was not possible except with moral liberty: the breaking of the fetters of sin; the casting out of devils of untruth, deception, hypocrisy, impurity; the cleansing of the soul; the regeneration of heart and conscience. So, while the end of His Kingdom was liberty, its law was holiness. This holiness was intrinsic, not ceremonial. It was not the washing of the outside of cup and platter, but purgation of the inmost life. It was godlikeness born from above; a new nativity, in the soul of man; godlike vision of the difference between evil and good; godlike detestation of unholy desire, purpose, word, and deed; godlike delight in purity and honour. "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."[1] Being godlike, this holiness was active and altruistic; not considering perfection of character an end in itself, but a means of usefulness. He declared that He had come "not to be ministered unto but to minister."[2] Therefore the life in this Kingdom must be service. Its members must live for one another, bearing one another's burdens and so fulfilling the law of Christ. They must learn His great solicitudes for the wandering and the fallen; His great compassions for them that are ignorant and out of the way; His great forbearance toward the unthankful and unworthy; His great tenderness toward the sorrowing and desolate; His great guardianship of childhood and immaturity. But such a life of service

[1] Matt. 5:48. [2] *Cf.* Matt. 20:28.

requires some overmastering inspiration. Men cannot by natural impulse thus live out of themselves, in effort often unrewarded, for their human brethren. They do not instinctively feel moved to give time and strength for lives that may reject or nullify their efforts, and even turn against those that offer them. If they are to live this life of service, which is the opposite of the life of passive or aggressive selfishness, they must be inspired to live it. Christ provided a deathless inspiration, moved by which nothing has seemed too exhausting or too degrading to be done for others by such as truly have caught the spirit of His Kingdom. That motive is love, enthusiasm for humanity, devotion to mankind. He imparted that inspiration, not by formal precept but by incarnating Himself in the race and living in it and for it with passionate, self-spending affection. Those who know Him receive this inspiration. They come to look upon mankind as through His loving eyes, to judge mankind as through His compassionating judgment; and thus, in their several measures, and with a love like His, they follow in His train. They feel, as keenly as others, the ignorance, insensibility, vileness, malevolence, and folly that appear too often in human lives. They know how, by nature, men speak evil of one another, and of the race. But when discouraged, repulsed, betrayed, they remember Christ, and are glad, with His gladness, to go on.

Of this race [says one] Christ Himself was a Member, and to this day is it not the best answer to all blasphemers of the species, the best consolation when our sense of its degradation is keenest, that a human brain was behind His forehead and a human heart

beating in His breast, and that within the whole creation of God nothing more elevated or more attractive has yet been found than He? He associated by preference with the meanest of the race; no contempt for them did He ever express, no suspicion that they might be less dear than the best and wisest to the common Father; no doubt that they were naturally capable of rising to a moral elevation like His own. An eternal glory has been shed upon the human race by the love Christ bore to it. And those who would for a moment know His Heart and understand His Life must begin by thinking of the whole race of man and of each member of the race, with awful reverence and hope.[1]

Such was the life purpose of Jesus Christ: to be this King over this Kingdom, to create, out of the fulness of love in His soul, a new society of mankind, world-wide in scope, related to God in and through Himself, making for righteousness, peace, and joy upon earth—a Kingdom having for its end intellectual and moral liberty, through knowledge of truth; for its law, holiness of the soul; for its life, service of mankind; for its inspiration, love and enthusiasm for humanity. By what power did He proceed to carry out His life purpose? Not by the appeal to force. He carried in His hand no sword. He called to His aid no legions of men or angels. He formed no alliance with states and governments. Neither did He appeal to miracle. That He wrought miracles is true, and that some of His miracles impressed men greatly is true; yet on miracle He never depended as the power whereby to establish His Kingdom. His miracles were incidental acts of love and comfort, or of instruction. When, in His temptation, He was asked to awe and win the multitudes

[1] *Cf.* SEELEY, *op. cit.*, pp. 56, 57.

by flinging Himself from the pinnacle of the temple, He rejected the suggestion with anger. When solicited by the scribes to establish His claim by a sign, He refused. Far different was the power on which He relied. It was the power of self-sacrifice. He offered all the privileges and joys of His Kingdom to men. If they accepted them and entered into the liberty of righteousness, He was glad. If they turned and assailed Him, He submitted to assault and injury; giving Himself through suffering for those who would receive Him on no other terms. At last the radiant life purpose in His soul, rising to vanquish absolute rejection by absolute self-giving, spoke triumphantly through death. By suffering all things, He entered into His Glory. His Cross became His throne. There He conquered, by giving up all for others.

We may not know, we cannot tell,
What pains He had to bear;
But we believe it was for us
He hung and suffered there.

He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us good;
That we might go at last to heaven,
Saved by His precious Blood.

Oh! dearly, dearly has He loved,
And we must love Him too;
And trust in His Redeeming Blood,
And try His works to do.[1]

If, as we have reason to believe, Christ was sorely tempted early in His ministry to accomplish His life

[1] Mrs. Cecil Frances Alexander.

purpose by the ordinary means open to ambition, what complete victory over that temptation He achieved, when, on the Cross, He gave up all!

How characteristic of the Lamb of God was the resistance of the temptation and at the same time how incomparably great the self-restraint involved in that resistance! One who believes Himself born for universal monarchy, and capable by His rule of giving happiness to the world, is entrusted with powers which seem to afford the ready means of attaining that supremacy. By the overwhelming force of visible miracle it is possible for Him to establish an absolute dominion and to give to the race the laws which may make it happy. But He deliberately determines to adopt another course; to found His empire upon the consent and not the fears of mankind; to trust Himself with His royal claims and His terrible purity and superiority defenceless among mankind; and however bitterly their envy may persecute Him, to use His supernatural powers only in doing them good. This He actually did, and evidently in pursuance of a fixed plan. He persevered in His course, although politically, so to speak, it was fatal to his position, and though it bewildered His most attached followers. But by doing so He raised Himself to a Throne on which He has been seated for nigh two thousand years, and gained an authority over men greater far than they have allowed to any legislator; greater than prophecy had ever attributed to the Messiah Himself.[1]

I said, a few moments ago, that he who would have access to the deeper mysteries of Jesus Christ must begin his approach in the historical fact, the life purpose of Christ. On this we have dwelt; with the result, I venture to hope, of seeing how it sets Him apart from others. He can no longer be identified with the great sages of the world, for they, even the most noble, complete themselves in their teachings. Wisdom is their

[1] *Cf.* SEELEY, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

end, and, in the utterance of wisdom, they fulfil their lives. Not so with Him. His teachings are of incalculable gravity and excellence. We know that He was a Teacher sent from God. The words that He speaks unto us, are spirit and life. Nevertheless He does not, like the sages, fulfil Himself in His teachings. His end is not the utterance of wisdom, to leave behind Him books of instruction. There is in Him, as the very soul of His being, a life purpose that lifts Him and projects Him far out beyond the limits of spoken wisdom, so that He embraces the world, not with a view to instruct it but to change it, to recombine its elements, to purge and redeem it unto righteousness, to govern and guide it unto holy happiness; to bring it out of darkness into His marvellous light by the power of His marvellous love. Christ is a Saviour, not a sage.

Neither may Christ, in His kingly purpose, be classified with any who have worn earthly crowns and exercised lordship over their fellow-men. It is inevitable among these that they carry the signs of distinction. The royalty of the world has its appropriate modes of expression, its natural separations from common life. Splendid equipment, rigid etiquette, wealth, courtly attendants are not luxuries only but necessities of kings. By common consent the world accords them these, as reasonable perquisites of office. Christ, claiming sovereignty over all kings, and control in all kingdoms, depends on and possesses none of these things. No palace, no fortress, no sceptre, no courtiers, no luxurious repose, no separation from the common—yet King of kings. He purposed to rule the world, yet through a

Kingdom that is not of this world; a Kingdom that derives none of its support from armies, taxes, alliances, or prestige; that has nothing to do with war or violence; that is founded in character, governed by holiness, inspired by love. His Kingdom is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. He is a King, but from all kings, as from all sages, He is set apart. He stands alone; the First and the Last; His power, love; His throne, the Cross, as the sign of his life purpose.

Having now come to see the uniqueness of Christ and wherein that uniqueness consists, even in the life of holiness and the death of sacrifice, he who would have access to the deeper mysteries of Jesus Christ must advance from the study of history into the study of experience: he must consider the power of Christ in the Christian Consciousness. May I recall to your memory some words in my first lecture about the nature of individual consciousness? Consciousness is "knowledge, through testimony within oneself, of impressions, thoughts, feelings that make up conscious existence. It is the self-knowing soul, holding counsel with itself, taking knowledge of itself inwardly as an entity separable from the whole outlying universe."[1] In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad the question is proposed: "What do you mean by self?" And the answer is given: "It is the spirit behind the organs of sense which is essential knowledge, and shines within the heart."[2] It is within the self-knowing soul of every man who will receive Him, that Jesus Christ, day by day, year by year, seeks to accomplish His life purpose. Within

[1] *Cf.* lecture *in loc.*, p. 15.

[2] Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 4:3.

the circle of consciousness He enters, not as a bodily appearance, but as a spiritual presence. In the historical and fleshly manifesting of Christ, of which we have become cognisant through trustworthy records of Scripture, we know Him objectively, as a person apart from ourselves. We discover the prophetic and kingly purpose of His Incarnation. This is fundamental knowledge of Christ, inestimable and indispensable. But it is not the highest form of knowledge. From knowledge of Christ Historical we advance into knowledge of Christ Mystical. Him Whom we have known objectively, as an adorable fact, an ideal expression of holy love, we now discern subjectively, as the inseparable and inmost life of the soul; the Ground of our transformed and illumined consciousness, the hidden Fountain of our being, springing up within us unto everlasting life. Those who attain this mystical, immediate consciousness of Christ, as in oneness with themselves, know by its testimony that they have advanced in spiritual life to a maturity, in comparison with which the first historical apprehension of a Jesus of the past is the correct but inchoate knowledge of childhood. That knowledge never ceases to be precious; but its distinctive message is absorbed and swallowed up in the mystical unfoldings of Christian experience; so that one may say: Though I have known Christ after the flesh yet now henceforth I know Him thus no more. For me to live is Christ. Yet in this absorbing of the Christ Historical in the profounder experiential knowledge of the Christ Mystical, the sense of identity between the earlier and the later knowledge

continually intensifies. The Christ Mystical, immediately discerned in the circle of consciousness, is the continuous, present, subjective manifestation of the same Christ Historical, and not another. The marks of His character, clearly defined upon the page of history, are not lost in a vague spiritual presence. The spiritual presence of Christ is not a moving cloud of impersonal influence; it is a fixed, determined experience; fixed by historical facts. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. The Christ Historical and the Christ Mystical are one. When we consider His character objectively, as embodied in His historical life among men, its moral splendour invests His humanity with Godlike majesty and completely establishes an ideal of manhood. Holy, guileless, undefiled, separate from sinners, He assimilates all good, rejects all evil. Our thought cannot rise to a higher ethical conception than that which He embodies. His humanity is the Alpha and Omega of perfection. When we know Him mystically, as the Christ within us, the Ground and Spring of our illumined consciousness, all the force of His ideal manhood is brought to bear subjectively upon our own. Being in Christ we are made new creatures. Old corruptions of desire and purpose stand condemned in the presence of new conceptions of a potential manhood, conformed in thought, word, and deed to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. A new moral imperative is enthroned in consciousness, and summons every thought, desire, and volition to submit to the law of a new manhood revealed in Christ Jesus. In like manner we may con-

sider objectively the disposition of sacrificial love, embodied in Christ's historical life among men. We may note His persistent purpose to overcome others by loving ministration rather than by argument or force; to give Himself unsparingly to whatever He was prompted to do by His affection for the world and His discernment of its needs; "to found His empire on the consent and not the fears of mankind, and however bitterly their envy may persecute Him, to use His supernatural powers only in doing them good."[1] We may stand, where reverent observers for twenty centuries have stood, before the Cross of Calvary, lost in wonder, as the suffering and shame of the public crucifixion give occasion for more splendid demonstrations of love which the most horrible of deaths cannot quench. But when we know Him mystically, as the Christ within us, the Ground and Spring of our illumined consciousness, this invincible love individualises itself in our experience, speaks to us in terms of personal affection, wells up into consciousness with tremendous appeal to our noblest instincts. We know that He Who witnesses mystically within us is He Who has taken us up, through His Cross and Passion, into a higher life in God, the Eternal Source and Home of finite consciousness. Life takes on new meaning as Christ Crucified becomes identified with us and we with Him, Who loved us and gave Himself up for us; in union with Whose death we also may die unto sin.

I have said that the knowledge of Christ Historical is not the highest form of knowledge. From it we

[1] *Cf.* SEELEY, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

advance to knowledge of Christ Mystical, immediately discerned in consciousness, and, so doing, we reach a spiritual life of greater maturity. The mysteries of Jesus Christ are not nature-marvels, external signs, and portents. They are mysteries of the Spirit, inwardly apprehended in terms of ethical self-realisation. He comes to animate and control our moral powers; to regulate our natural tendencies, by furnishing us with new motives; to interpret to us the depths of our own being, the suggestions of our sub-conscious life. He comes, I say, to animate and control our moral powers. In northern countries animals are found that pass into a state of torpor at the approach of frost and remain in winter sleep, or hibernation, until the vivifying airs and sunshine of spring return. There is, common to man, a state of the soul which is moral hibernation, a winter sleep of conscience. The ethical sense is torpid. Distinctions of right and wrong become inoperative. Sin awakens no remorse; holiness, no zeal. Conduct moves at the bidding of inclination, and leaves behind its trail of results, as ships cast over the waste into the sea, heedless of its character. All this is changed when Christ is known mystically within the circle of consciousness. With Him comes, not remote and academic impulse from an historical ideal, but immediate resurrection of the ethical sense, as power born again within us. Conscience springs from its winter sleep, sensitive and strong. Love of righteousness, hatred of sin become passions of the regenerate soul. The eyes of the understanding are opened. The veil of illusory egotism is rent in twain. The soul perceives its true

selfhood as hid with Christ in God. As one passed out of death into life it says: It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me.[1]

He comes also to regulate our natural tendencies by furnishing us with new motives. Christ does not make men holy by dehumanising them, but by teaching them to regulate their humanity. He does not require men to extirpate natural tendencies by violent asceticism. Sharing their humanity, He helps them to place those tendencies under control of the highest principles of personal and social righteousness. It has been said:

> The revelation of God in Christ is not meant to supplant His prior revelations of Himself in nature and in man. It takes account of them and is built upon them. No doubt it subordinates the natural qualities and tendencies to the higher truth it reveals. But though thus denying to them a false independence and supremacy, it does not lessen but heighten their value, by supplying them with new motives and loftier aims.[2]

Finally, He comes to interpret to us the depths of our own being, the suggestions of our sub-conscious life. Christ, mystically known, present within the circle of consciousness, is the answer to those vast and shadowy questions, those subtle approximations to infinity, those brief and blessed intimations of kinship with God, that pass and repass within the soul at depths that at once preclude expression and suggest certitude. Apart from Him, those solemn intimations of the soul's boundlessness are bewildering. They issue in unquenchable thirstings; in cries of the soul to which no response comes; in the stretching out of hands to which no

[1] Gal. 2:20.

[2] FORREST, *op. cit.*, pp. 288, 289.

answering touch is given. But in Him, as in another and greater self, the soul gains insight to its own ideal, receives the answer to its own questions, is made complete; and, reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, is changed into the same image. Such is the power of Christ in the Christian Consciousness, when one advances from knowledge of Christ Historical into knowledge of Christ Mystical.

There remains one further step to be taken by him who would have access to the deeper mysteries of Jesus Christ. Having begun in the historical fact, the life purpose of Jesus Christ, and having advanced into the region of experience, there learning the power of Christ in the Christian Consciousness, he is prepared for the final and distinctive truth of the Christian religion: the Divinity of Jesus Christ as the Revelation of the Heart of God. To that final truth I can well conceive the Oriental Consciousness returning as to a congenial resting-place, an inheritance alienated for generations; and now, by the sure reversion of time, brought back to those capable of restoring its pristine grandeur. In closing the preceding lecture I spoke of those Palestinian Orientals on whom rested the immediate power of Christ's presence at the time of His historical manifestation. Permit me to recall the words then spoken:

> The reflective powers of their minds were roused; their hearts began to burn within them. They recalled His Words and the spirit of His life; they comprehended His purpose, and perceived that it was universal. They knew that He was a prophet, but not like any other prophet, for in Him wisdom found its source. They knew that He was great, but not with the mere greatness of men,

for men centre their greatness in themselves, and His seemed to go forth from Himself and be lost in sacrifice upon the world. Then they recalled the philosophic ideals of a Wisdom, an intelligible Word, coming out from the abyss of the Unknowable, to interpret the secrets of the Divine intelligence, to be a Mediator between the Eternal and the ephemeral, the sum of the thoughts of God, the idea of ideas.[1]

From distant Oriental sources these intimations had entered and filled the Greek consciousness, corroborating impressions already there. In the Rig Veda is a whole hymn addressed and devoted to the Word—the Logos. In the *Mahâbhârata* we read: "The Eternal Word, without beginning, without end, was uttered by the Self existent."[2] To those Orientals who came under the immediate power of Christ it seemed that these impressions and hopes of the ancient East were corrected and completed in Him. Therefore these majestic souls discerned His meaning and His nature. For them He was the loving Spirit of the Lord that filleth all the earth, the Brightness of the Everlasting Light, the Unspotted Mirror of the Power of God, the Image of His Goodness, the Mediator, the Heavenly Man, the Word that was in the beginning with God, that was made flesh and dwelt among men, that men might behold His glory, full of grace and truth. It was a wondrous interpretation, rich with the mystical spirit of the Oriental Consciousness. Time has but confirmed this interpretation. Christ Mystical, entering the circle of consciousness, has corroborated the

[1] *Cf.* Lecture V, p. 167.

[2] *Mahâbhârata* 8. 533. *Cf.* article on the "History of the Logos," by Herbert Baynes, M.R.A.S., *Royal Asiatic Society's Journal*, April, 1906, pp. 373–85.

first impression produced by Christ Historical. We know that the life purpose of Jesus Christ answers and fulfils the highest aspiration in the moral consciousness of humanity; that we cannot feel the absolute value of good nor recognise its authority in higher senses than appear in Christ. From this we conclude that He *is* the Outspeaking Voice from the shoreless, soundless depths of Infinite Being, confirming the goodness of holy love as the inner Essence of the Heart of God. This is the Divinity of Christ expressed through the words and acts of His human personality; not a mechanical or local divinity existing by the side of, yet apart from, our human nature; but a Divine Nature that blends and identifies itself with the thoughts, feelings, volitions of human individuality.[1] Herein is the gospel of the higher Christian monism, the gospel of the oneness of man with God. This Christ, Whom we discern in the circle of consciousness as so absolutely one with us that we are "members of His body," is none other than the very Word of the Infinite, mediating to us, on the ethical side, the truth of our oneness with God and the implications contained in that truth, even as, on the intellectual side, the same truth of man's oneness with God has long been mediated to the higher religious thinking of the East, through its philosophy and metaphysics. Christ, as the revelation of the Heart of God, speaks to us supremely through His Cross and Passion. There pain and sacrifice appear in a new light. No longer are they marks of weakness and defeat, no longer pitiable evils born in the travail of a groaning creation,

[1] *Cf.* JOHN CAIRD, *Fundamental Ideas*, Vol. I, pp. 14, 15.

but disclosures of the character of the Eternal, expressions of love's holiest purpose, to save others by giving itself. The anguish of Christ upon the Cross no longer is mistaken by us for the torture of the vanquished. It is the lonely ecstasy of the Divine Sufferer, Whose love demands pain as the only available language through which to make His purpose understood. How splendid is the loneliness of that sacrificial life when we recognise in it the revelation of God! Not expecting, not demanding, not receiving full response, yet still finding its joy, and the fulfilment of its deepest self-realisation, in the boundless giving forth of itself in love. Reflections of this spirit we have seen in Christly souls, whose lives, animated by the same sacrificial purpose, have taken on a Godlike dignity, gravity, tenderness. But in Christ we rise, through His crucified humanity, into the region of the Infinite. We touch the Heart of God, the fountain of holy love, out of which all holy love in us has emerged as the secondary and responsive image of Himself. Well may I quote at this point the words of Caird of Glasgow, which, were they spoken here in India, might not unworthily be the words of an Oriental seer:

> Can we think, then, of this finite world as constituting, for infinite as for finite intelligence, the medium of its self-realisation? Have we here that second self of infinitude, in the knowledge of which the riches of the Divine nature, its boundless capacities, are unfolded? There is a sense in which this is true. God reveals Himself in nature and in the finite spirits He has made in His own Image. The capacity of love in the heart of God may be said to find a new channel for its outflow in every human soul; and in the responsive love which that love awakens there is something which we can think of as adding a new sweetness and joy to the very

blessedness of the Infinite. Nay, seeing that love reaches and can only reach its highest expression in suffering and sacrifice, and that the richest, purest blessedness is that which comes through pain and sorrow, can it be wrong to ascribe to God a capacity of self-sacrifice, a giving up of Himself, a going forth of His Own Being for the redemption of the world from sin and sorrow?[1]

Gentlemen of the East: It remains for me to close this course of lectures. I do so with regret for myself on withdrawing from this sweet association with your minds, and with gratitude to you for your sustaining and inspiring attention. I trust that I am not guilty of presumption in attributing your close following of my remarks, not exclusively to your distinguished and gracious courtesy toward a guest, but in part also to your interested consideration of the matters which have been under discussion. I have presented what may be described as the Oriental aspects of the Christian religion, namely, those that involve the mystical and subjective relations between God and the soul, and that reach their highest perfection wherever the Divinity of Jesus Christ, as the Word, the Logos, of the Infinite, is most profoundly entertained within the circle of consciousness. As a student of religion I observe that certain civilisations lend themselves and others do not lend themselves to these aspects of Christianity. The civilisations of the West have many noble qualities and are contributing indispensable elements to the religious development of the world. They are great in applications of religion to practical affairs, in nurture of religious institutions, in recovery of historic doctrines,

[1] JOHN CAIRD, *Fundamental Ideas*, Vol. I, p. 73.

methods, records, in appreciations of Christ as a teacher, in attempts to incorporate His ethical ideals into modern life. But the civilisations of the West are deficient in the theory of religion, and, more especially, in the metaphysic of life that lies back of religion and involves the fundamental questions of Being. More and more those civilisations are surrendering themselves to a passion for progress, which, being analysed, is found to signify increased efficiency in methods of living, betterment of the world as a safe and convenient dwelling-place for men, improvement of the human stock in coming generations, custodianship of the earth by strong races. I do not for a moment question the value of these ideas, if properly subordinated to an adequate metaphysic of life, and grounded in discriminating theory of Absolute Being and the unity of the race in God. No doubt it may be the will of God that Western races shall be the world's reformers, and the world's educators in the art of living. Nor do I for a moment forget the peril of over-concentration upon a metaphysic of life, and a theory of Ultimate Being. The life of pure thought may disqualify for the life of action. Speculative pursuit of the ideal may make the practical and the real repellant, may produce timidity of soul, paralysis of the will, irresolution; may relegate men and even nations to the sphere of inefficiency and backwardness; always preparing, never accomplishing. But the genius of Western civilisation tends to the opposite extreme. Zeal for the practical aspects of religion increases because of their obvious relations to progress; but interest and faith alike decline in the

deep mysteries of Godliness, the profound relations of the finite soul of humanity to the Ultimate Ground of Being. The improved future of the world absorbs the attention of the West. Meanwhile it loses touch with great inheritances of the spirit, and sacrifices the ancient metaphysic of the manifested Godhead in Christ to the strenuous dynamic of modern utilitarianism. In other words: the Oriental aspects of the Christian religion are being overlooked by the West in its practical ambition to reform and educate the world. This is a calamity, as I pointed out in opening this lecture. It is a situation that feeds instincts of aggression, authority, pride, externalism, already more than sufficiently developed in the Western world; that depreciates those deeper truths and values of the Christian religion which subdue worldly pride, correct cruel and intolerant ambition, restrain worship of the visible, and teach men and nations gentleness, patience, sympathy, self-sacrifice. At this juncture one thing is needed above all else for the religious development of the human race: the influence of the Oriental Consciousness for the reinterpretation of Christianity to the modern world. In the diversity of His gifts, a good God has endowed the East with certain sublime traits, which, in the first lecture of this course, I attempted to describe: the Contemplative Life; the Presence of the Unseen; the Aspiration for Ultimate Being; Reverence for the Sanctions of the Past. To attribute these to you is no flattery, for by the grace of God you are what you are. To suggest the service which, by the consecration of these traits to Christ, you can render to the world is no pre-

sumption, for we are members one of the other and have a right to summon one another in the name of the common good.

I approach you, therefore, at this last moment, with frankness and fearlessness. We stand on the border of a new age, when great reconstructions in world relations are imminent. We, who are now of mature age, may not live to witness their fulfilment, but our children and our children's children shall see them. In those reconstructions the initiative of the East shall be felt in ways undreamed of by our fathers. The East shall come to its own again and speak in the councils of the world. Time, the great restorer of postponed inheritances, the great adjuster of equities, shall summon the East not to the recrudescence of old conflicts but to new rivalries of the mind and of the spirit. The day of her visitation, the hour of her opportunity, shall come from God. Shall she know that day and be ready for that hour? The answer to that question is bound up in another: Shall the Oriental Consciousness place its sublime qualities at the service of Jesus Christ, and become unto the twentieth century what she was unto the first, a prophet of the Highest? The Oriental Consciousness has the gifts that the world needs to offset its strenuous externalism and guide it back to the secret place of the Most High. The Contemplative Life, the Presence of the Unseen, the Aspiration for Ultimate Being, Reverence for the Sanctions of the Past are the Four Gospels with which a Christian East may re-evangelise the West; giving back to it the spirit of the first days; co-operating with it to lead the

world out of its confusion, grossness, and sin, into the peace and purity of Jesus Christ.

Gentlemen and friends: My message is delivered. Faulty and feeble though it be, it is yet the word of one who loves India as few Occidentals have loved her. It may be that never again I shall visit this land. In the course of time I shall pass from the earth into that Unseen, upon which in common we love to meditate. But were I to return from some other world to visit you, my counsel and exhortation would be unchanged: Receive Jesus Christ as the Word—the Logos of the Infinite—Who reveals in sacrifice the Heart of God. Honour Him indeed as a Sage, Who comes not to destroy but to fulfil your traditional aspirations. But do more than that: Worship Him as a Saviour Who enters the circle of consciousness to make all things new, purging away the lusts of sin. Then go forth as His prophets and make Him known Eastward and Westward, dedicating your splendid gifts to Him for the world's sake, until His Kingdom come and His Will be done, in earth as it is in Heaven!

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